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MATZO OF ZION



Contents [by original pages]

Setting the stage

The Case: The Slaying of Father Thomas Al-Capuci and his servant Ibrahim Amarah Al-Roumi to use their blood in the preparation of the "Bread of Zion".

The Date: Wednesday, the 2nd of Zul-Hijjah, 1255 H. (February 5, 1840 A.D.).

The Place: The Jewish Quarter in Damascus.

The Participants in the slaying of Father Thomas Al-Capuci were the following Jews:

1. David Harari, 2. Aaron Harari, 3. Isaac Harari, 4. Joseph Harari, 5. Joseph Lifyado, 6. Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh, 7. Rabbi Moussa Bokhoor Yehuda (known as the Salaniki), 8. Saliman Al-Hallaq (the Barber).

The Participants in the slaying of Ibrahim Amarah were the following Jews:

1. Moussa Farhi, 2. Murad Farhi, 3. Aaron Salamboli, 4. Isaac Picciotto, 5. Aslan Farhi, 6. Jacob Abou Al-Afieh, 7. Joseph Menachim Farhi, 8. Murad Al-Fattal.



The Franciscan Church - Damascus, Bab Toma,
The site of Father Thomas Al-Capuci's Tomb.



A Marble Plate marks the Tomb of Father
Thomas Al-Capuci inside the Franciscan
Church in Damascus, Bab Toma.

The Translation of the Document affixed over the Marble Plate.

THE HISTORY OF THIS PLATE

The renewal of accusation regarding the religious ritual murder, in Damascus, led Sir Moses Montefiore to realize that the Metallic Plate which is placed inside the Capucin Church in this city, in addition to the accusation of the Jews of murdering Father Thomas, will continue to be the source of religious hatred towards them (the Jews). And after he received, in the year 1840, from Cardinal Rivorola (the Chief of the Capucin Order in Rome) the assurance that the text of the hostile writing will be removed; and the obtaining a firm and adequate support from the French Government, Sir Moses found an appropriate chance to travel to Damascus and intervene, in person, on the actual scene of the matter.

He arrived in Damascus on July 3, 1849. Sir Moses had the courage to go, in person, to the Church, and in the presence of two priests he copied the text in Arabic and Italian languages. It appears that there was some doubt regarding the accuracy of the text....

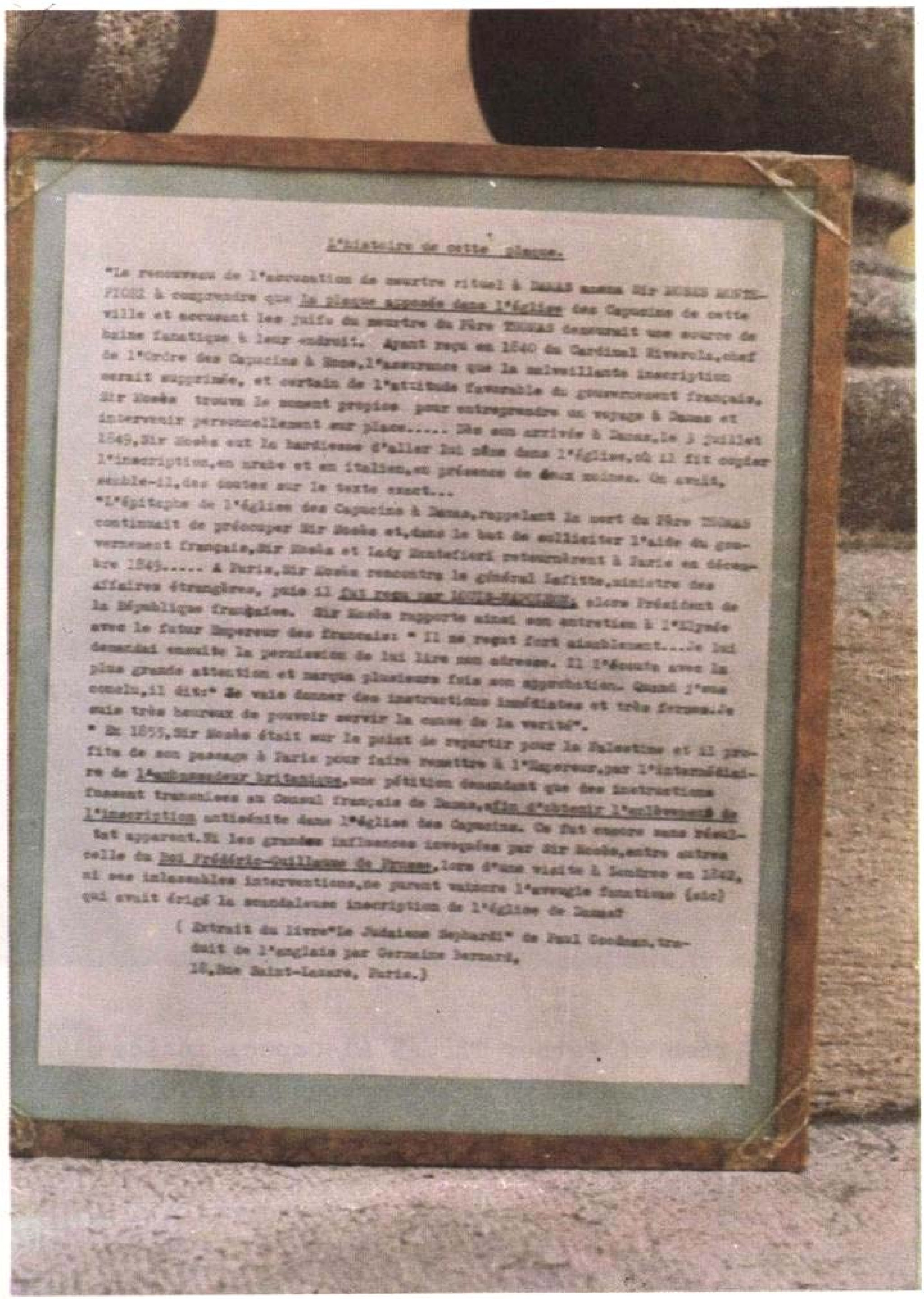
The tombstone in the Capucin Church in Damascus, as a reminder of Father Thomas' death, became a source of continuous concern for Sir Moses. In order to request the assistance of the French Government, Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore returned to Paris during the month of December, 1849. In Paris, Sir Moses met with General Lafitte, the Minister of Foreign Affairs; and soon thereafter he was received by Louis-Napoleon, the President of the Republic.

According to Sir Moses, the following conversation took place at the Elysee Palace with the Future Emperor of France:

> "He received me with a great welcome....Then I asked His permission for me to read my request. He listened with great attention and expressed His agreement many times. And when I finished reading He said: 'I shall give direct and strong orders; I am very happy to be able to serve a rightful cause!'."

In 1855 Sir Moses was planning to travel again to Palestine. During his stop in Paris he presented to the Emperor, through the French Ambassador, a request for a directive to be sent to the French Ambassador in Damascus to secure the theft of the hostile anti-semitic document from the Capucins' Church. There was no apparent response. Great pressures were placed by Sir Moses from that time forward as well as by King Frederic-Guillaume of Prussia, during his visit to London in 1842. Their continuous intercession did not succeed in putting an end to this blind prejudice, or the fanaticism which lay at the foundation of this shameful document in the Church of Damascus.*

* Quoted from the book Sephardic Judaism by Paul Goodman.



L'histoire de cette plaque.

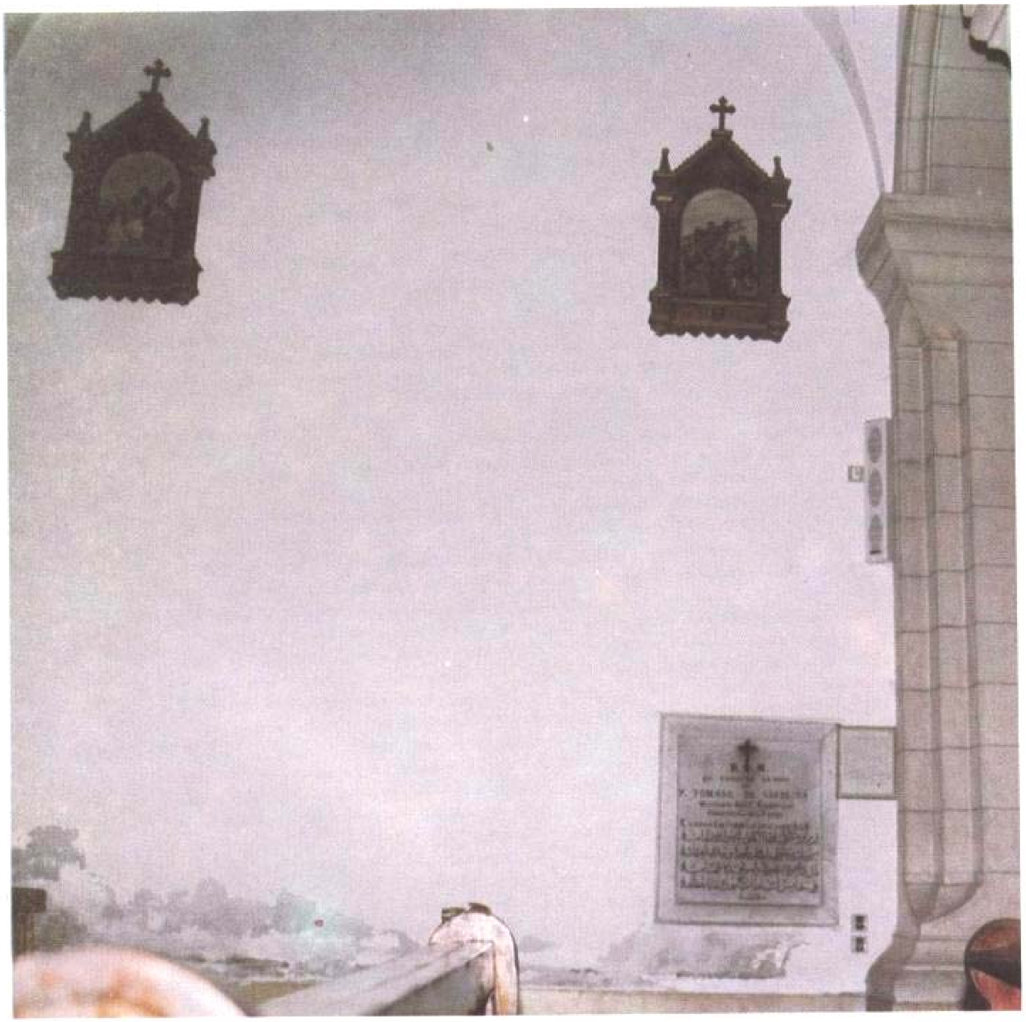
"Le renouveau de l'accusation de meurtre rituel à DAMAS amena Sir MOSES MONTEFIORE à comprendre que la plaque apposée dans l'église des Capucins de cette ville et accusant les juifs du meurtre du Père THOMAS demeurait une source de haine fanatique à leur endroit. Ayant reçu en 1840 du Cardinal Riverola, chef de l'Ordre des Capucins à Rome, l'assurance que la malveillante inscription serait supprimée, et certain de l'attitude favorable du gouvernement français, Sir Moshé trouva le moment propice pour entreprendre un voyage à Damas et intervenir personnellement sur place..... Dès son arrivée à Damas, le 3 juillet 1849, Sir Moshé eut la hardiesse d'aller lui même dans l'église, où il fit copier l'inscription, en arabe et en italien, en présence de deux moines. On avait, semble-il, des doutes sur le texte exact...

"L'épitaphe de l'église des Capucins à Damas, rappelant la mort du Père THOMAS continuait de préoccuper Sir Moshé et, dans le but de solliciter l'aide du gouvernement français, Sir Moshé et Lady Montefiori retournèrent à Paris en décembre 1849..... A Paris, Sir Moshé rencontra le général Lafitte, ministre des Affaires étrangères, puis il fut reçu par LOUIS-NAPOLEON, alors Président de la République française. Sir Moshé rapporte ainsi son entretien à l'Elysée avec le futur Empereur des français: " Il me reçut fort aimablement....Je lui demandai ensuite la permission de lui lire mon adresse. Il l'écouta avec la plus grande attention et marqua plusieurs fois son approbation. Quand j'eus conclu, il dit:" Je vais donner des instructions immédiates et très fermes. Je suis très heureux de pouvoir servir la cause de la vérité".

" En 1855, Sir Moshé était sur le point de repartir pour la Palestine et il profita de son passage à Paris pour faire remettre à l'Empereur, par l'intermédiaire de l'ambassadeur britannique, une pétition demandant que des instructions fussent transmises au Consul français de Damas, afin d'obtenir l'enlèvement de l'inscription antisémite dans l'église des Capucins. Ce fut encore sans résultat apparent. Ni les grandes influences invoquées par Sir Moshé, entre autres celle du Roi Frédéric-Guillaume de Prusse, lors d'une visite à Londres en 1842, ni ses inlassables interventions, ne purent vaincre l'aveugle fanatisme (sic) qui avait érigé la scandaleuse inscription de l'église de Damas"

(Extrait du livre "Le Judaisme Sephardi" de Paul Goodman, traduit de l'anglais par Germaine Bernard, 18, Rue Saint-Lazare, Paris.)

The Document affixed on Marble Plate next to the Tomb of Father Thomas inside the Franciscan Church - Damascus, Bab Toma.



The Tomb of Father Thomas Al-Capuci inside the
Franciscan Church - Damascus, Bab Toma.

INTRODUCTION

In the thirties of the 19th century, Muhammad Ali managed to liberate Syria and unify it with Egypt, the thing that generated a serious international crisis emanating from the dangers that it could constitute against the European interests. A new international coalition emerged under the leadership of England with the aim of destroying this unity. France monopolized a special standing in favour of Muhammad Ali in the hope of utilization this friendship and obtaining privileges in this important area. Later on, and due to European pressure, it was obliged to quit him. Several schemes sprang to existence trying to destroy this unity assuming different forms. Some tried to attach to Syria a special standing to alienate it from its surroundings, and others asked for the return of the Jewish Kingdom.[1]

[1] Vienna, Feb. 8th 1841. Abstract from a telegram sent from Prince Metternich to Count Appon. Archives of foreign affairs, Turkey, French Embassy in Constantinople, Political Department Volume 282. Fol. 70-78.

In this turbulent era and in Muhammad Ali Pasha's final phase of mandate upon Syria, Damascus was terribly shocked by a horrific crime, the victim of which was Father Thomas Capuchi.[2] This crime was committed by a group of Jews who wanted to extract his blood to make a matzo (For Yum Kippur). It was not the first crime of its kind for the West had already experienced many crimes of this sort, not to forget those ones that found their scene on Czarist

[2] Capuchin Priest, spent 33 years in Damascus, (1807-1840). He was familiar with Pharmacology and Medicine. He used to treat the patients in Damascus free, Muslims, Christians or Jews. He was skilled in Vaccination against smallpox, which he practised for the first time in Damascus. He rendered great human services during the proliferation of epidemics. He was an object of trust, respect and love by all people.

On the day of the crime he happened to be in the Jewish Quarter treating a smallpox-struck Jewish boy. (See Al-Macsoud Fi Qawa'id al-Talmud Trans. Yussef Hanna Nasr Allah, pages 29-30).

Russia. Some crimes were discovered and recorded despite all efforts to cover up or to destroy the evidence.[2]

Researchers' pens flocked from the East and the West to present the contents and to reveal the hidden motives of these crimes. Thus this crime of slaying Father Thomas Al-Capuci, and his servant, was not the first of its kind.[3]

[2] A similar crime was committed in Algeria in the middle of the 18th century when Jews kidnapped a Christian boy and drained his blood; but the Jews succeeded in getting this incident dismissed by offering money to the Turkish governor of Algeria.

[3] The Consul General of Egypt wrote to the French Foreign Minister, on April 2, 1840: "I find myself obliged to present to you a copy of a report, which was sent to Mohammad Ali and prepared by a Rabbi who was converted to Islam, that reveals to us the truth that human blood is necessary for the Jewish celebration of Yom Kippur. This strange discovery helps us understand the disappearance of large numbers of people without any knowledge of their fate, and certain Greek slaves bought by the Jews during the war may have disappeared for this reason."

Also, the French Consul in Damascus referred to similar incidents. He was watching and observing the development in this particular case because the victim Father Thomas was a French subject living in Damascus.

This crime, surely, is not the last of its kind either.[1] But this particular case gained special meaning because of the surrounding political environment.

The Egyptian authorities in Cairo and Damascus were very concerned about this horrible crime. The French Consul participated, personally, in the investigation because the victim was a French subject. The investigation revealed serious matters that surpassed the crime itself as to the nature and motives connected with the Jewish teaching, prescribed by the Talmud, which contained destructive deviations guided by black hatred of humanity and all other religions equally, and together.[2]

[1] See Rohling: Jewish Beliefs According to the Talmud. A chapter contained quotes from the Talmud says: "The life of misery and subjugation over the People of Israel will continue until the elimination of foreign rule over them. Before the Jews finally rule over the rest of all nations, war must break out and destroy two thirds of the world. Then the Jews will spend seven continuous years destroying the weapons they had captured after their victory. (p. 65)

[2] The French Consul in Damascus sent a translation from the Talmud:

> 1. There is nothing said or done in Christian Churches which is not different from the truth, and not different from what the unbelievers practice. The duty of the Jew is the destruction of these Churches. The Christian Bible is nothing but a belief of Great Sins; therefore, the duty of the Jew is to burn it, regardless of the presence of God's name in it.
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> 2. It is the duty of the Jew to curse the Christians three times daily, and pray that God may destroy them all, especially their Kings and Rulers. This is the Law, and its faithful observance falls upon the leaders of this belief, especially those whose duty it is to urge the curse of the Christians. God has ordered the Jewish People to put their hands on Christian wealth by all means possible, it matters not whether they use trick, theft, or interest charge.
>
> 3. It is the duty of the Jews to consider the Christians as beasts and to treat them as such. If a Jew sees a Christian on the edge of a cliff, he should push him or throw him to the bottom.

The French Consul explained that there are some Talmudic references to the Muslims, which are even more severe than those for the Christians; and that he refrained from translating them due to his fear of Muslim anger over them.

The Jewish reaction created a great tumult everywhere; and their leaders and supporters were knocking on the doors of the rulers in Europe and the United States to intervene on their behalf and efface the traces of this crime, and declare that the Jews were not guilty of this crime.

Even today, whenever the Jews commit a crime which stirs world opinion, they are not satisfied to be declared innocent of such a crime but they exploit to the maximum the opportunity to obtain more influence over public opinion.

They started this strategy by exploiting the office of the Austrian Consul in Damascus to intervene in the investigation on behalf of some of the accused Jews on the ground that they were Austrian subjects; and they requested the intervention of his government on their behalf.

The Jews exploited the tolerance of the Egyptian authorities and the French Consul in Damascus, when they got in touch with the accused persons urging them to deny any involvement; they enticed those who had already admitted committing the crime, and threatened them in order to reverse their confession. Then they started applying pressure over the French Consul through his superiors in Paris and Constantinople. They accused the French Consul in Damascus of injustice and oppression, and of being jealous of their Jewish wealth.[1] This accusation came from the Austrian Consul who also accused the national authorities, who were conducting their investigation, by using torture to compel the accused persons to admit their crime. They repeated certain statements concerning the Islamic law in this regard;

[1] The French Consul responded by saying that Mr. Laurin the Austrian Consul, was not aware of the fact that the Jews of Damascus paid much of their gold in the case of Father Thomas Al-Capuci because they knew, and for long time, that they were responsible for the disappearance of a large number of other religious communities' members. He further referred to the huge sums of money offered by the Jews, as a bribe, to some French Consulate staff, members to get them to cooperate in wiping out all traces of this crime.

and as to the accusation of torture, even if it truly took place, this was an act of some individuals so, therefore, Islamic Law had no role or connection in this matter.

Although, the use of torture with the accused criminal, in order to obtain his confession, was a known practice then in Europe and in the United States. We will not overstate the fact if we say that torture is still practiced in these countries today.

The Jewish leaders made their move in Europe and in the United States by using their financial and public information influence, and by urging these Great States to intervene on their behalf. They stirred their supporters in Parliaments and the Press; they organized demonstrations supportive of their cause, and sent notable representatives of the European Jews to Mohammad Ali.

The Jews succeeded in their exploitation of the dilemma facing Mohammad Ali by the Great Powers hostility and encirclement in Syria; and they also exploited his financial crisis by offering him huge sums of money.

Because of all this, they succeeded in obtaining a Firman or Declaration Order from Mohammad Ali. In fact they hoped by forming its contents - to end the case in their favor, and to do away with it altogether.

And when the Sultan of Turkey recovered Syria, from Mohammed Ali, Montefiore obtained from him another Firman declaring the protection of the Jews from the investigation of crimes similar to that of Damascus.[l]

But the Jews were not satisfied with what they had achieved so far, and directed their concentrated effort to erase the writing inscribed on the Tomb of Father Thomas in the Franciscan Church which reads: "Here lies the bones of the missionary Father Thomas Al-Capuci, who was murdered by the Jews on the fifth of February, 1840."[2]

Thus, the Jews continue to commit individual crimes and collective slaughtering, and succeed in wiping off the evidence of their crimes by the virtue of using their financial, political, and propaganda influence in the ruling circles of Europe and the United States. And they are not satisfied with this but they end up with political and economic gains, almost always. For the demonstrations which were organized by the Jews and their supporters in Europe, especially so in the Anglo-Saxon countries; and the petitions they introduced in the wake of this crime, were centered on their demand of the return of the Jews to Palestine.

They succeeded in convincing people with high responsibility and political status in some European states that the return of the Jews to Palestine would be the best solution to the Eastern Question.[1] Therefore, through the influence of the Jews and their supporters in England, the British Government adopted the subject of Jewish Protection throughout the Ottoman Empire, and the adoption of the idea of the return of the Jews to Palestine. Accordingly, Palmerston sent a letter to his ambassador in Constantinople stating that there exists the idea of

[1] Archives Affaires Etrangeres, Alexandrie, Direction Commerciale, Vol 28, No. 220, pp. 542-543.

[2] Montefiore wrote to Palmerston and to Louis-Napoleon on this matter. The French Consul in Damascus was concerned about the anxiety and restlessness of the Christians in Damascus over the visit of Joseph Rothschild, the famous French Financer, and his effort to remove the inscription on Father Thomas' Tomb.

See Archives Affaires Etrangers Consulat de Damas-Correspondance politique, Vol. 2 (1848-1853), No. 1, pp. 132-135.

[1] The English Newspaper, The Globe, wrote that the return of the Jews to Palestine amounts to the formation of the most beautiful diamond in the English Crown.

The Morning Chronicle, which represented the official views of Palmerston, the Foreign Minister, confirmed that the creation, or more plainly, the recreation of this Syrian-Palestinian (Jewish) Kingdom is the ultimate need of the Eastern Policy, and it will serve England.

See Dr. Hajjar: L'Europe et les destinees du Proche-Orient (1815-1848) p. 333.

Dr. Ibrahim Hajjar pp. 334-335.

returning to Palestine among the scattered Jews in Europe; and that this idea needs a suitable response, and that everything indicates that

their wish now is closer to its fulfillment than ever before. It is clear that the Jews possess huge wealth. As it appears, clearly too, that each country that receives a great number of the Jews will obtain great benefits. But their settlement in Palestine depends on the solution of the Eastern Question. Accordingly, it is useful that the Sultan should encourage the return of the [Jews] to Palestine, and their settlement there. Not only because he will benefit materially from this but because this will prevent the prospect of future expansion plans by Mohammad Ali or his successors.

Palmerston requested that his ambassador explain this to the Ottoman Government and to advise it, strongly, to encourage the return of the Jews to Palestine. What happened in 1840 was repeated many times in the twentieth century when the Zionists committed collective crimes in Palestine and in Lebanon, that stirred the conscience of the noble ones throughout the world, and were denounced by world's opinion. But, again, Zionist financial, political, and propaganda influence succeeded every time in thwarting the resulting feeling of deep anger, distracting the people's attention and thought from these crimes. And the Zionists, instead of being penalized, came out with great rewards of huge sums of financial aid, and huge amounts of the most modernized and sophisticated weapons. And, instead of one Mohammad Ali in the nineteenth century, they found more than Mohammad Ali in the twentieth century.

This crime, the slaying of Father Thomas by the Jews, took place in the city of Damascus, Syria, the city of religious tolerance and peace. Many more crimes similar to it took place in many different parts of the world. How could such a crime take a place when the Jews live in societies where they are only a very small minority? And, how did those societies ignore the impact and influence of this small spiteful minority?

Here too, it must be said that both Western and Eastern societies were way ahead of Arab-Islamic countries in discovering the Jewish ideology, and its hidden contents of destructive evil. Accordingly; these societies embarked upon research and serious inquiries regarding the self-isolation of the Jews, in their own quarters (the ghettos), and their own insistence upon this isolation, in order to attract and invite hatred, so they will be singled out for their marked character and characteristics. And it may have been that the imposed environment of tolerance by the Muslim Arabs was the primary factor which provided the opportunity for the Jews to enjoy the life of complete freedom throughout the Arab-Islamic region. They came to know everything about the regions of this world, at the same time, they benefited from their private isolation, and shrouded their own world with obscurity, so that the world would not know of them except a meager amount of information.

It was not strange, therefore, that the city of Damascus was strongly jolted by the discovery of this horrible crime, and to be awakened suddenly to what had befallen her, to the sad reality of not knowing those who lived with them, and among them.

The alarmed call of the city was expressed by the mothers warning their children: "beware of going far from your own house; because the Jews

might pass by you, they might put you in their sacks and take you away to slay you and drain your blood, to make their bread of Zion."

Generation after generation carried this warning of "Jewish betrayal" with them. Then the Jews established a country for themselves in the land of Greater Syria. But did the Jewish hatred of others disappear? Or had the Talmudic teachings, with their crimes and distortions, continued the practice of their hatred against humanity, and the surrounding societies?

The observation of the daily events as to what is happening in the occupied land gives daily confirmation beyond the shadow of a doubt that what is described as the Zionist Racism is nothing but an extension and remolding of the Talmudic teachings. And if the Jew refuses to live in a non-Jewish home, this led the refusal of the enlarged ghetto's society (Israel today) to live in the home of some other societies.

My intention in publishing this book was nothing more than the exposure of some secrets of a Jewish religion sect and the practices of its adherents. Their hateful, blind solidarity to their beliefs, and the execution of Talmudic teachings which were formulated by their religious beliefs and teachings (The Law of their Prophet Moses). The Holy Quran revealed, adequately, God's saying: Suras II: 75, 79:

> Can Ye (O Ye Men of Faith) entertain the hope that they will believe in you? - Seeing that a party of them heard the Word of God, and prevented it knowingly after they understood it.
>
> Then woe to those who write the Book with their own hands; and then say: "This is from God," to traffic with it for a miserable price!
>
> Woe to them for what their hands do write, and for the gain they make thereby.

It is also my intention through the writing of this book to show, indirectly, the importance of the state's national sovereignty in the Syrian region because it clearly reveals the arrogance and defiant behavior of Isaac Picciotto (a Jew working in the Austrian Consulate in Damascus) in front of the Chief Justice of the Court. This particular incident could not have taken place if foreign influence in Syria had been non-existent at the time. Therefore, we want to direct our attention and open the eyes of our Arab brothers to these facts, and examine the subject of national sovereignty as indivisible. We want also to show that no foreigner has any right whatsoever to ignore these facts. President Sadat's (President of Egypt after Nasser) grave mistake, which was the cause of his assassination, was that he had a low regard for the national rights of (Egypt, and) the Egyptian people, and subsequently he sold their national rights to the devil.

For those reasons we have witnessed the submissive posture of the leader of Egypt, the largest Arab country, idly standing by as a spectator while the tragedy of Lebanon took place in the summer of 1982.

The sovereignty of Egypt became relative and incomplete after the Camp David agreement.

Finally, I want very much to direct my great appreciation and thanks to my comrade in arms, Al-Muqaddam Bassan Assali, who was my right arm in the preparation of this book. I hope that I have been able to fulfill some of my duties in the process and the task of exposing the practices of our nation's historic enemy, seeking only the cause of God.

Damascus

September, 1986

THE MURDERING OF FATHER THOMAS AL-CAPUCI AND HIS SERVANT IBRAHIM AMARAH IN DAMASCUS, 1840 A.D.

— The Elements of the Research:

I. The Tip of the String

II. The Crime

III. Blood for the Bread of Zion (The Jews)

IV. The Slaying of the Servant Ibrahim Amarah

V. The Denial of the Austrian Embassy Employee Isaac Picciotto

VI. The Memorandum of Accusation Against Isaac Picciotto

VII. The Lawful Use of Christian Blood and Wealth

VIII. The Role of the Foreign Consulates

I

THE TIP OF THE STRING

Damascus was quiet as usual on Fridays. On this day people attend to their own private lives and to their living conditions, regaining during their day of rest what they have lost in strength during the week, and prepare for work the next day. Government offices and state buildings are empty on Friday except for those who are responsible for

maintaining security and the requirement of public service. During this day on Friday (the 4th of Zul-Hijjah, 1255 A.H) the 7th of February 1840 A.D., the Assistant to the French Consul in Damascus, Mr. Beaudin, came to the Office of the Governor of Damascus and informed him of the fact that Father Thomas Al-Capuci had left his house on Wednesday (two days ago), as was his daily custom to go to the Jewish Quarter to practice his work of treating the

[1] The Patriarchate Magazine, (formerly The Syrian Magazine), VI, vol. 19 (November 15, 1931), pp. 598-608.

sick and to give vaccinations against smallpox, and had not returned home. Due to the fact that the Muslim community Quarters were far from his residence, Father Thomas arranged his visits to the Muslim Quarters early in the morning. After work he would return to take his lunch and rest for a short time before he would go to the Christian section, and enter the Jewish Quarter at the end of the day, and return to his house later in the evening.

On this particular day he was carrying with him an advertisement for a public auction for the Tarnoba estate, since Tarnoba had died earlier. The time for the return of Father Thomas to his house drew near, and passed, and yet he was nowhere in sight. His servant, Ibrahim Amarah, became concerned and he hurriedly went to the Jewish Quarter looking for Father Thomas, but he too did not return.

Mr. Beaudin stated that the pharmacist of the Sham's Hospital, Mr. Santi, who borrowed a book from Father Thomas earlier, came that day to return the book. He knocked on the little church door several times, and when no one answered the door he went to the big Franciscan Church. However, the priests did not show much concern about the matter, as they assumed that he might have been visiting some sick people. The next day, which was Thursday, February 6th, some Christians came early for prayer and finding the Church's door closed they thought that Father Thomas had already conducted the service and that he had left on his daily rounds; so they also left. Also Mr. Massari, the physician of the Governor of Damascus, Sharif Pasha, had invited all the priests for a dinner party at his home on that day. All came except for Father Thomas. This caused the other priests to become concerned for Father Thomas. After the dinner party was over they went to see the French Consul to inform him regarding their concern over the absence of Father Thomas since Father Thomas was a French subject.

The French Consul, Mr. Comte De Ratti-Menton also received the information with concern. He went immediately to the Church of Father Thomas Al-Capuci where he found a crowd of concerned people gathered. They shouted at once saying that the priest had left yesterday afternoon to the Jewish Quarter and that he and his servant were missing in that area.

The Consul ordered one of the neighbors to climb down the ladder inside the Church and to open the door. When the neighbor climbed down he went to the door and found it closed but not locked. This fact seemed to

indicate that the servant left the church with the intent of coming back shortly. The Consul entered the Church, and when he went inside the kitchen he found dinner had been prepared for both, Father Thomas and his servant. It was ready to be eaten which indicated that both men went out with intention of returning for dinner.

Their concern turned to fears that both had met with death outside the Church. There was no evidence to indicate death caused by a theft of money or valuables as everything inside was in its proper place and orderly. In addition many had witnessed Father Thomas entering the Jewish Quarters yesterday afternoon. However, no one had seen him leaving the Jewish Quarters. The Consul returned to his office and sent his assistant to meet with the Egyptian Governor of Damascus, Sharif Pasha, carrying with him what information he obtained.

The Governor of Damascus immediately issued an order to make necessary searches and investigations, and sent the man who was responsible for security (Ali Nounou) to inspect suspected places in the Jewish Quarter and some houses inside it. But researches did not result in anything. Then two Christian natives, Catholics, (Nima Kassab and Michael Kallam) gave their evidence which said that they were passing through the Jewish Quarter, on the day father Thomas disappeared, 15 minutes before sunset. And when they reached the lane of Talei Al-Fiddaha in the first part of the Jewish Quarter, they saw the servant of Father Thomas going hastily while he was entering the Jewish Quarter. They stopped him and asked where he was going and why he was walking so fast. He replied that his master had told him before that he was going to the Jewish Quarter, but he had not come yet, so, he came to look for him. At that time, suspicions pointed that Father Thomas and his servant had been lost together in the Jewish Quarter.

Sharif Pasha, the Governor of Damascus sent for four rabbis and asked them to announce in their temples, that forgiveness would be granted to anyone who gave information that would help in revealing the criminal case, coupled by a promise to keep their names secret in case of an attempt on their lives. Moreover, Sharif Pasha, issued his orders to inspect some houses belonging to the Jews, but all efforts proved to be of no avail.

Mohammad Ali succeeded in the 19th century in the liberating of Syria and unifying it with Egypt. This action caused a serious international crisis because the unity posed a grave danger to European interests. Therefore, an international alliance was formed under the leadership of England. France did not join this alliance because she was hoping to cultivate the friendship of Mohammad Ali in order to gain certain privileges in this sensitive region. But later on France deserted Mohammad Ali because of the increasing European pressure on her. And in order to destroy this unity numerous plans were formed either to isolate Syria in the region or to bring back to reality the establishment of the Jewish Kingdom.

During this unstable period, and about the end of Mohammad Ali's rule over Syria, a horrible crime shocked Damascus, a crime that resulted in the slaying of Father Thomas Al-Capuci by a group of Jews who wanted to use his blood in the making of the Yom Kippur unleavened bread.[1]

This was not the first crime of its kind. The West knew of many similar ones, and so did Czarist

[1] Father Thomas spent thirty-three years in Damascus (1807-1840). He was a knowledgeable physician and a trained pharmacist. He treated the sick regardless of their religious belief - Muslims, Christians, and Jews. He was active in eradicating and fighting contagious diseases. He earned the love and the respect of all. Father Thomas was murdered on the same day he was visiting and treating his patients in the Jewish Quarter, while treating a Jewish boy against smallpox.

Father Thomas had placed public notices for the Auction Sale of the estate of Tranoba in all the Christian Churches. When it was observed that there were no such notices found in the Roman Orthodox Churches or the Jewish Temples it was concluded that the disappearance of Father Thomas was before his arrival to these places. And when on the next day a notice was seen mounted, in the regular place, where public notices were usually placed, next to the Jewish Barber shop of Soliman Saloom, suspicion now turned on this Jewish Barber.

The authorities removed the notice and examined it. It revealed that two wafers (medicine capsules) were used on two corners as stickers when all notices were mounted by the use of four wafers. Upon examination of these capsules it became clear that all were of white color, the same kind used by Father Thomas. But the two capsules used to fasten the notice next to the Barber Shop were of different color - one being red, and the other violet.

The Jewish barber, Soliman Saloom, was brought for questioning. He said that the notice on the wall was mounted by Father Thomas himself. When he was asked about the method of mounting it he said that Father Thomas used two capsules. Then he was asked again about the color of the two capsules in spite the fact that they were on the back of the paper and how did Father Thomas place the notice on a place that was too high for him to reach. The barber confessed that because so many people handled the notice he was concerned that it would fall and be lost if he did not remove it from its original place and place it on a higher spot.

The barber, Soliman Saloom, was recalled for further questioning and was vigorously drilled with many questions. He was also warned and threatened. On Friday, 14th of February, 1840, the barber confessed that Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh, Moussa Bokoor Yehuda (Salaniki), David Harari, and his brothers Isaac and Joseph Harari, and Joseph Lifyado were together, and that they all walked through Ziqaq (alley) Al-Tallaj, in the Tallaj neighborhood, passing the house of David Harari between noon and afternoon of Wednesday, the day of Father Thomas' disappearance, when Father Thomas met with them.

The barber, Soliman Saloom, also confessed that Isaac Picciotto, one of the Jewish elites, stopped at his barber shop after his first questioning to ask him if he had confessed to anything. When the barber replied negatively, Mr. Picciotto said to him: "I was expecting that of you, and hoped it would be the case." He also stated that he had been to the French Consul regarding the investigation to help the barber

during his jail-detention. This was in order to keep Mr. Saloom, the barber, silent. Following these revelations by Mr. Saloom, the authority summoned those whose names had been given by Mr. Saloom. They were asked to state what facts they knew regarding the disappearance of Father Thomas Al-Capuci and his servant. Their answers were as follows: Joseph Lifyado stated that his daughter had died on a Friday, fifteen days earlier, and as was their custom for the family of the deceased, they did not leave their homes so that he did not know anything regarding the case.

Isaac Harari stated that he did not know anything about the case, and that he and the barber Soliman Saloom were the type of business men who did not interest themselves in matters other than their work which was buying and selling. He denied any knowledge of what had been reported.

David Harari stated that he had not seen Father Thomas for two months. He denied that he had a meeting with those mentioned by Mr. Saloom. He further stated: "It is true that my house is located in the Tallaj Alley, but I know nothing about the meeting of those mentioned by Mr. Saloom during his interrogation by the authorities.

Joseph Harari stated that he was an old man who seldom left his house; that he had not met with Father Thomas in more than three months. He said that he had lived with the Christians all his life, spending the night in their homes, and they in turn slept at his home.

Finally it was the turn of Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh to speak and he stated that: "I returned to my house from work around sunset. Enroute I passed from Qassatliyeh road and not through the Tallaj neighborhood. Therefore, I did not see Father Thomas even one time. As far as the association is concerned, it is not ours. I have not met with them once in the last six months. However, we might have seen each other casually and then departed. I have no knowledge regarding the meeting of those mentioned in the case.

Aaron Harari stated that: "I live in a house near the British Consul's residence. Seldom do I go to that area to meet with my brethren. I have not seen the barber for eight days, and I leave for my work, and do not leave the market to return home before sunset. So this being the case, how could the seven of us have met."

Those men gave their statements in the absence of the barber because they were all booked together in a single room. Therefore, they were able to agree among themselves on what to say and to deny their meeting. Then the barber Soliman Saloom was brought back to face them with his own statement. They insisted on their own statements, and everyone turned to him saying: "O beloved one, did you see us yourself? I pray to God for your salvation."

Then Joseph Lifyado decided to confirm his statement by saying: "I have proof; the death of my daughter was on the night of Thursday. Both Isa Al-Mukhowil and Matta Ghibreel were in my house and they can confirm that." The others insisted by stating that the report of the barber was false and had no foundation in the truth since they did not return to their homes from the market place until sunset.

When Rabbi Moussa Bokhour Yehuda came for questioning, he stated that he had no knowledge of the case; that he did not meet with the mentioned group association; and that he knew nothing regarding this so called "meeting," and that he did not leave his house before sunset. Therefore, he did not see Father Thomas and did not meet with him.

Faced with the denials of these accused, the authorities decided to book them for further investigation.

The investigation resumed on Sunday, 13th, Zul-Hijjah (February 16, 1840). At this point, the barber Soliman Saloom did not confess to other than having seen Father Thomas meeting with the seven men. The investigators decided to direct their efforts to the barber because they felt that he knew more regarding this case, more than he had told thus far. They continued their questioning of him, and kept up their interrogation of him at times with kindness, at other times with threats. The barber began to break down and requested that he be granted immunity and pardon before giving further testimony. This was granted. Then he confessed that the above mentioned group of seven men took Father Thomas to David Harari's house. "After half an hour they called me from my shop, it was after sunset. They said to me:

'Slay this priest.' Father Thomas was in the room with his hands tied. I said to them: 'this is not my business,' and I refused to do it. Then they gave me money, and they also gave me the public notice of the estate auction sale. Aaron Harari gave it to me. They instructed me to mount it near my shop.

When you first brought me for questioning, David Harari saw me and he said to me: 'beware of admitting anything. We will give you money.' It was the servant (Murad Al-Fattal) of David Harari who came to my shop to request me to go to the meeting place.

The above statement of confession was recorded, and the servant Murad Al-Fattal was summoned for questioning.

The Investigator resumed his questioning of Soliman Saloom, the barber, by saying to him: "Your confessions yesterday were statements different from your statements today. And you said that the questioning and the confession was obtained due to beatings. That is to say that the confession was obtained from you by force. Now you are accusing these men; we want to know the truth. Do not be afraid. We do not want to accuse anybody. And if there is another side to the case, state it and do not be afraid."

The barber insisted that he had told the truth, and that he was not denying anything of what he said. The Investigator then asked: "Were there any women or children in the house?" The barber answered: "There were none other than the seven men, and the servant who remained outside the house."

The questions by the Investigator and the replies of the barber, Soliman Saloom, were as follows:

Q: Who opened the door?

A: David Harari opened the door.

Q: After they asked you to slay the Priest, did you stay there? Where did you go?

A: I did not stay. I left for my shop, closed it, and then I went home.

Q: Did Father Thomas try to cry out?

A: He was encircled by the men. This I think prevented him from crying. Even if he had
cried, his voice would not have been heard outside. In addition, the surrounding houses
were all occupied by Jews.

Q: Was his servant with him or not?

A: His servant was not with him. Another group murdered the servant. This I know to be true.

Murad Al-Fattal, the servant of David Harari, came and was questioned by the Investigator. The servant said: "My teacher sent me after sunset to call the barber Soliman Saloom. I called him then went to my house."

Q: Was anyone else present? Who was with your teacher?

A: I did not see anyone other than my master (teacher) who did not leave the house on that day because he was complaining of a toothache.

Q: How did you spend your day on Wednesday of Zul-Hijjah 2nd, the day on which Father Thomas disappeared?

A: I was in the marketplace. I went to the custom house to claim a bale of wool material. Then I went to Georgi Anjouri. I remained in the market place until about sunset.

Mr. Anjouri was questioned regarding the truthfulness of what David Harari had said of his meeting with him last Wednesday. He said that David Harari did not come to his place on Wednesday, but that he came on Thursday afternoon. Some of what he said to me was that "the Christians were accusing us regarding the case of Father Thomas. Is it possible that we would do something like that"? Are we that kind of people? I answered him: "That's what they are saying".

Then the Investigator sent a written letter to the custom house. The reply to the letter arrived, sealed with the custom officer's seal. It

stated that David Harari did not come on Wednesday, but that his servant came on Thursday and claimed a bale of wool; that David Harari had not come to the custom house at all.

The Assistant to the French Consul – Beaudin - performed the investigation on Tuesday, 16 Zul-Hijjah. He started by questioning the barber Soliman Saloom.

Q. Who gave you the public notice of the auction which was found mounted next to your shop?

A. Aaron Harari is the one who gave me the public notice paper.

Q. Where did he give you that paper? And at what time?

A. He gave it to me half an hour past sunset on Wednesday. That was when I went to David Harari's house. It was there that he gave it to me.

Q. Where did you get the capsules for mounting it?

A. Aaron Harari gave it to me.

Q. Where did Aaron Harari get the capsules?

A. I do not know. All I know is that he gave it to me with the notice paper.

Q. Did anybody see you when you were mounting the paper? At what time was that?

A. I mounted it early Thursday morning. No one saw me.

Q. Did you discuss this with anyone of your family, like your father or your wife?

A. I did not discuss this with anyone at all.

Q. Did they pay you money to buy your silence?

A. They gave me nothing except a promise to give a sum of money.

Q. Who has been responsible for your family and house expenses since the day of your imprisonment?

A. They promised me that they would take care of the expenses for my family. However, they have not lived up to their promises.

Q. How did they give you this promise?

A. When the police-Abou Shihab Tofnakji-came and arrested me on Sunday afternoon, David Harari passed by my side and whispered to me saying: "do not be afraid, we will give you money".

Q. Are you prepared to swear, according to your faith, to the truth of your testimony?

A. I am very much ready to swear.

Until this point in the investigation the barber Soliman Saloom had maintained his denial of any knowledge of the murder, or of his presence thereof. So Beaudin asked him:

Q. Did you try to spy on what had happened to Father Thomas after you left David Harari's house on Wednesday?

A. The barber answered that he was not able to come back to enter the house.

Q. Did you know that Father Thomas has posted the notice paper on Wednesday?

A. Yes! I did. But I did not see it because I was not in the shop at that time. I was at Rabbi Moussa's house. He had sent for me. When I returned to my shop I found a crowd of laborers reading the advertisement. I asked them what does it contain? They said that Father Thomas had put it there for the auction.

Q. Did you know the shape of the paper?

A. I did not see it. There is no doubt that the Harari's family removed it because if they were not the ones who removed it, they would not have given it to me to put it back.

On Wednesday, Zul-Hijjah 14, Murad Al-Fattal was brought in again, and the Investigator asked him:

Q. Where were you, and where was your master David Harari when he asked you to bring the barber Soliman Soloom to him?

A. I was in the marketplace. When I passed by the Harari Family houses, he was standing in front of his house. He said to me: "Send the barber to me." So I went to the barber and sent him. Then I returned to my house.

Q. Your master has denied that he asked you to send the barber to him.

A: What is my job? Am I not a servant? That is what he ordered me to do, and that is what I did.

Q: If he was the one who demanded of you to send the barber to him, why is he denying it?

A: Perhaps the barber is accusing him of this because if he denies it he might be labeled with the accusations.

Q: David mentioned that he was suffering from a toothache. This does not seem to agree with the statement that he was standing in front of his house. If it was necessary for him to stay inside his house due to a toothache. You need to give us whatever information you have. Because you are a servant, no harm will come to you. So tell the truth and do not be afraid.

A: The truth of the matter is that I was afraid, and that is why I said what I have said. The truth is that my master did not ask me to send for the barber, and I did not send for him.

At this point in the investigation pressure on the servant Murad increased with added threats. Then he stated: "You brought me in front of my master Rafael Farhi and questioned me. He looked at me and winked, so I denied it."

The Investigator said to him: "Do you fear Rafael more than you fear me?" The servant answered, "You will whip me and then let me go. But he will beat me until death. For that I am more afraid of him than of you."

II

THE CRIME

Friday 25th of Zul-Hijjah, 1255 H (28th of February 1840).

The Meeting of the Investigation Committee Participants:

Liwa Sadiq Bey, Commander of Cavalry Artillery

French Consul to Damascus Comte De Ratti-Menton

Assistant to the French Consul, Mr. Beaudin

Mr. Massari Hakeem, Governor of Damascus.

Due to the denial of the accused men, who were jailed and separated from each other, as of now, and the fact that they are all holding firm to their statements "that they knew nothing regarding the disappearance of Father Thomas, and due to the increasing doubt about the role of the barber, Soliman Saloom, it is necessary to bring him back to stand before the Investigation Committee. When he was brought before the investigators again he was bombarded with fast and repeated questions. At the same time he was promised protection if he confessed to the whole truth. So he confessed as follows:

David Harari, and his servant Murad Al-Fattal, left from my shop to his house about half an hour alter sunset. When I entered the house I found therein Aaron Harari, Isaac Harari, Joseph Lifyado, Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh, and Rabbi Moussa Bokhoor Yehuda (Salaniki), and Father Thomas who was bound. Then David Harari and his brother Aaron said to me, "go and slay Father Thomas." I said to them, "I cannot do that." They said, "wait." Then they got up and brought a knife. I threw him (Father Thomas) down on the ground and held him down with the help of the others, and placed his neck on the edge of a large wash basin. David took the knife and slew him. Aaron completed the slaying afterward. They drained his blood and were careful not to spill one drop outside the dishpan. We then pulled him from the room in which he was slain to another room containing some wood. We took off his clothes and burned them. Murad Al-Fattal, the servant of David Harari came and found Father Thomas, in the room with wood, slain and naked. The seven men then requested me with the help of the servant Murad to cut the body into small pieces. We asked them, "what are we to do with it?" They replied, "throw him in the Black River, which is the carrier of the city waste." It passes by the Jewish Quarters near the house of Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh. We started to cut the body into small pieces and to put them in a sack and we emptied it in the river, in a repeated fashion. When we had completed our work and returned to David's house

they told the servant that they were going to marry him at their own expense. And they said to me that they were going to give money. I, then, returned to my house.

Q: What did you do with the bones?

A: We placed the bones on the tiles and smashed them with the mortar's handle.

Q: What did you do with the head?

A: We smashed it the same way.

Q: Did they pay you some money?

A: I mentioned to you that they promised their servant marriage expenses, and promised me money. They also threatened that they would accuse us of the murder if we told of their secret.

Q: What kind of sack did you use to move the cut pieces of body? Did you use one or more sacks? Did you carry the sack by yourself or did you and the servant take turns in carrying them? What color were the sacks?

A: The sacks were made of jute. They were of a bluish color. Only one sack was used. The servant and I carried it together.

Q: How did you cooperate with the servant in carrying it?

A: We carried it together. Sometimes I carried it by myself. At other times the servant carried it by himself.

Q: Where did you put the sack after you finished your work?

A: We left it in David Harari's house.

Q: It appears from your statements that when you slew Father Thomas you put his blood in the wash basin, and no single drop of blood fell outside the basin. But after you pulled the body to the other room, and cut it to pieces, still no blood was spilled?

A: In fact I did not pay attention if blood came from the body or if it did not.

Q: What was the floor of the room like, where you cut up the body? Was it made of dirt or tiles?

A: The room was unfinished one full of dirt and wood. The cutting of the body was done on dirt.

Q: What did you do with his internal organs? How did you carry them? Did you cut them up? What did you do with them?

A: We cut them all and put them in the sack which we threw its contents in the salty (Black) River.

Q: Did any of the parts drop or leak out of the sack?

A: When a coffee sack gets wet with water it becomes thick; this prevents anything from leaking out of it.

Q: How many of you participated in the cutting, and how many knives did you use, and what kind?

A: The seven men directed us to the way of the cutting. But the servant and I did the work alternately. When one got tired the other would take over. The knife we used was of the kind used by butchers. The same was used in the slaying.

Q: What did you do with it after the completion of the work?

A: We left it in David Harari's house.

Q: Where are the tiles that were used for the breaking of the bones located?

A: They are located between the two rooms, it is a covered walkway.

Q: How long did the slaying take? Was the servant present or not? If he was not present what time did he come? Who opened the door for him?

A: The servant was not present during the slaying. He came after the removal of the body to the second room, and after the clothing had been stripped from the body. Someone opened the door for him.

Q: Were there any women or children in the house? Was anyone other than the seven men present in the house?

A: There was no one other than the seven men, the servant, and myself present.

Q: At exactly what time did the slaying take place? How long did you wait for the blood flow to cease? At what time did you move the body to the other room? At what time did the servant come? How long did it take for the whole task? Where did you put the blood after you finished your task?

A: The operation started about two hours past sunset or a little later. Since the room floor level was about one step higher than the rest of the house, the neck of the Priest was placed at the top of the step, a wash basin was placed on the floor (under the head), it took about half an hour, perhaps two thirds of an hour, for the blood to stop. Then we transferred the body to the second room about an hour and a half after Isha. When the servant arrived the body was naked. When we finished with the operation it was about 8:00 p.m. As for the blood, it was left in the basin in the first room. I left afterward and I did not

know what they did with the blood.   The servant remained after my departure.

Q: Where did the removal of the clothes from the body take place? Who performed the task?

A: The removal of the clothes from the body took place in the same room where the body itself was cut to pieces. David and Aaron removed the clothes in the presence of all the rest.

Q: What kind of body cover was Father Thomas wearing? And, what type of material was the belt?

A: Father Thomas was wearing a black robe. I did not touch it with my hands. His belt was the usual one, simply a white rope.

Q: Is the Salty River where you threw the body uncovered (exposed) or covered?

A: The River is covered. There is a flat stone at the entrance of the chicken market next to Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh's house, which is used as a cover. The River is exposed when the stone is removed. That is where we threw the remains of the body.

At this point the barber was returned to his private (solitary) room where he was imprisoned. Then the servant Murad Al-Fattal was recalled for questioning. They (the Investigation Committee) told him that the barber has confessed to everything and that there was no use for his denial.

The servant, Murk1 Al-Fattal, said: "I was not present when the slaying of Father Thomas Al-Capuci was carried out. When I came I found him slain and naked in the rabbi's room, where there was only dirt and wood. Soliman and I then started cutting the body. This was in the presence of David Harari, Aaron Harari, Isaac Harari, Joseph Harari, Joseph Lifyado, Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh, and Rabbi Moussa Bokhoor Yehuda. After we cut the body into small pieces, we then carried it and threw it in the Salty River. We used a coffee sack made of jute, to carry the body remains.

Then the questioning was resumed by the Investigator and the answers of Murad are as follows:

Q: What did you do with the bones?

A: We broke them with mortar handle over the floor tiles.

Q: What did you do with the head?

A: We smashed it with the handle too, over the floor tiles.

Q: Did they pay you money?

A: They promised to pay for my marriage expenses to the girl whom I was engaged to. They also promised the barber money.

Q: What kind of a sack did you use? Did you have one or more sacks? Did you carry the sack alone or did you carry one and the barber another? What was the color of the sack?

A: There was only one sack. We cooperated in carrying it together sometimes and one of us at other times. I carried alone, then the barber took a turn by himself. The color of the sack was white with blue shade.

Q: Where did you put the sack after you finished your work?

A: I do not know anything about it, or its whereabouts.

Q: It appears from your statement that when you slew Father Thomas you put his blood in the wash basin without single drop of blood falling outside the basin. But after you pulled his body to the other room and cut it to pieces was there still no blood which came from the body?

A: Some blood dropped from the arteries, but the dirt absorbed it. Nothing remained visible on the surface of the dirt floor.

Q: How about the internal organs? What did you do with them? How did you carry them? What did you do with them?

A: The internal organs were cut with their contents, put in the sack and then we threw them along with the other body pieces in the River.

Q: Did any blood or contents of the intestines leak from the sack during the removal operation?

A: The sack material was strong. It did not allow any leaking from the sack.

Q: Who participated in the cutting operation? How many knives did you use? What kind were they?

A: We used only one knife. It was the type used by butchers. No one other than Soliman and myself did the cutting which was done in the presence of the seven other men.

Q: Did you not ask regarding Father Thomas clothes as to what they did with them when you found him naked?

A: I asked. They said they had burnt them.

Q: Where is the place of the floor tiles which you used to break the bones over it?

A: The floor tiles are located between the two rooms, it is a covered area.

Q: When did you start with the operation and at what time did you finish with it?

A: We started about three o'clock. The work lasted until about seven.

Q: Where is the Salty River, the place where you threw the remains of the body? Is it an uncovered or a covered place? If it was covered how did you open the cover?

A: The Salty River is located near Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh's house. It is covered with a flat stone. We removed the stone and threw the remains in the River.

Q: Where did the barber go after completing the operation?

A: He went to his house.

Q: And you! How long after that did you stay at your master's house? Did you spend the evening with the others? What did you do?

A: I waited an hour and a half. I prepared the tobacco for the smoking of water-pipes for them and then I went to my house and slept. I do not know if they stayed overnight or went home.

The Investigator purposely asked Murad the same questions as were previously addressed to the barber. The answers of both men matched completely, almost with identical information. Thereupon, the Chairman (Head) of the Investigation Committee, Liwa Sadiq Bey, decided to immediately move to the scene of the crime. The members of the Committee agreed and accompanied him. They started their search with David Harari's house, the place where the crime was committed and carried out. The Investigator asked the barber Soliman Saloom (who was brought along with the others to identify the objects and places):

Q: Where did you carry out the slaying operation?

A: Here! In this furnished room. He (the Priest) was laid in the middle of the room; they put the wash basin under his neck and slew him.

Q: Where did you carry out the cutting of the body?

A: In this rubbish room. The wood was piled under the arch from the west near the door. Some blood traces were visible on the walls of the room.

Q: Where did you break his bones and his head?

A: In this flat space between the two rooms across the portico. (There appeared to be collapsed tiles caused by heavy pounding.)

Then the mortar handle was brought in. The barber recognized it and confirmed that it was the tool used to break the bones.

Next, the knives were introduced - there were three knives. The barber said that the knife he used was not one of them. It is much longer and sharper than these, he said. They searched for the knife but could not find it. The Investigators then dismissed the barber and called the servant Murad Al-Fattal to the scene. They asked him the same questions; and the answers were an exact match to that of the barber.

He pointed out the place where the cutting was performed; the place used to break the bones, and he recognized the mortar handle to be the same as he had used. Also he did not agree on the knives presented to him. He was asked about the place where the pieces of body were thrown. He led the Investigators to the Friday Marketplace and stopped in front of Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh's house and pointed at the place where the flat stone was removed and the body of Father Thomas Al-Capuci was thrown in the River.

The Investigators dismissed the servant and recalled the barber Soliman Saloom. He Confirmed the exact place where the remains of Father Thomas had been disposed by dumping them in the River. He lifted the stone covering, and the traces of flesh and blood were clearly visible therein.

The Investigation Committee called in specialized workers. The workers went down to the Salty River bottom and brought some parts of the body --- pieces of flesh, the liver, the heart, and some blood; and the head with pieces of Father Thomas' head dress.

Then the Chairman of the Committee, Liwa Sadiq Bey, ordered the transfer of what they had found to the Office of the Governor. He then he ordered them to send all his finding to the French Consul, after packing the remains of Father Thomas in special container, so that a medical committee of doctors could examine the bones to determine whether they were of human or animal type. After the examination the French Consul sent two reports on the matter.

The Testimony of His Excellency the Consul of Austria[1]

I, the undersigned, the Consul of Austria in Damascus confirm and admit that I was present at the Consulate of France in Damascus, when a team of Muslim Doctors assembled to examine the bones of the murdered Father Thomas. I heard their medical report confirming that the bones were

human. I admit that I saw some pieces of a black headdress like the one worn by Father Thomas.

March 13, 1840

Merlato

The Austrian Consul to Damascus

The Testimony of the French Doctors[1]

We the undersigned doctors, responsible agents of His Excellency the Governor, went to the residence of the French Consul for the purpose of examining bones. The examination revealed them to be those of a human being. Therefore, we gave this testimony in Damascus, February 29, 1840.

[1] The Patriarchate Magazine, VI, 1931, pp. 657-672.

[1] Rinaldi; G. Piccolo; F. Massari; Amiantia-Lorasso also the Governor physician and the Hospital head doctor.

Testimony of the Doctors Committee

The reason for this testimony, on this date, we the undersigned were called to the residence of His Excellency the French Consul in Damascus for the purpose of examining bones retrieved from the Salty River, as a result of cooperation by some Jews in uncovering the place in the presence of His Excellency the Consul. His Excellency requested us to conduct examination and study of the bones and flesh carefully; to submit a report according to our medical knowledge, as to whether the bones were those of human or animal, and to report faithfully and ethically as God commanded us. After the research it was evident to us all, without any doubt or uncertainty that the bones were those of a human being. We submit this testimony, signed and sealed, as evidence of our findings.

Damascus, Zul-Hijjah, 28, 1255 H.

Signatures:

Haj Misto Al-Sati, Chief Surgeon

Mr. Khalif, Surgeon Dr. Mohamad Amin Sakr. Dr. Mohamad Al-Sati

Dr. Mohamad Ben Al-Said Moussa

Witnessed by Michael Mashagah

The Testimony of Joseph the Barber

I, the undersigned, the barber who cut Father Thomas Al-Capuci hair as his barber, bear witness that the pieces of the black headdress which I saw at His Excellency's office, at the French Consul's residence in Damascus, were truly pieces from the headdress which Father Thomas used to wear. I identified the marking of the headdress to Father Franci's Al-Capuci at my shop before seeing and identifying the pieces of the headdress at His Excellency's House. I observed with certainty the red mark that I encircled the lower rim of the interior part of the headdress and which was a darker color than the upper part. This is what I know, and I bear witness to it before God.

Damascus, Muharram 8, 1256 H.

Yusuf Al-Hallaq

(Joseph the Barber)

Witness of Truth

Earlier the French Consul asked the servant Murad Al-Fattal the following:

"You stated that they were very careful in their collection of the blood in the basin, What did they do with it?" The servant answered: "It was for the asking of bread, a kind of bread used religiously." The Consul said: "How did you learn that?" the servant answered: "I heard them saying that the blood was for making the unleavened bread."

Then the Chairman of the Investigation Committee asked: "Since you did no see the blood, how did you know that they took it to make the unleavened bread?" He answered: "I asked them why did you keep the blood? and they answered me: to make unleavened bread."

The Chairman of the Committee resumed his questioning: "Was the slaying of Father Thomas for reason of an obligatory nature mandated by the Jewish Religion? Or was there feeling of hatred between them (Father Thomas and the Jews)? Or did they desire to put their hands on his money?" He answered: "I have no knowledge about that."

With that revelation the case of the slaying of Father Thomas Al-Capuci was confirmed, and the identifications and details were apparent. But the case of the murder of his servant, Ibrahim Amarah Al-Roomi, was not confirmed. Nothing was yet known about it. Therefore, it was decided to

recall the group of seven men to question them with kindness and without the exercise of any pressure, to be satisfied with the facts, and to place them face to face before the deeds they had committed.

III

BLOOD FOR THE BREAD OF ZION
(THE JEWS)

Record - Saturday 26th Zul-Hijjah, 1255 H
(March 1, 1840)

Isaac Harari was brought first, and was asked what he knew about the slaying of Father Thomas Al-Capuci. He answered: "We brought Father Thomas to David Harari's house. This was done by an agreement among ourselves. We slew him for his blood, and we put his blood in a glass bottle at Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh's house, according to the teachings of our religion. The essence of the matter was to obtain the blood because this is what our religion demands of us."

The questioning continued by the Investigator:

Q: "What color was the bottle in which you put the blood? Was it black or white?"

A: "The bottle was white, a milk bottle."

Q: "Who carried the bottle and gave it to Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh?"

A: "Rabbi Moussa Salaniki carried the bottle and gave it to Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh."

Q: "Why do you need the blood according to your religious teachings?"

A: "It is needed (for mixing) in the bread preparation."

Q: "Did you distribute the blood among yourselves?"

A: "No! The blood was not distributed to everyone, it is only distributed to the religious leaders such as Rabbis and others."

Q: "How did you agree among yourselves, and how did you organize your group to bring the Priest?"

A: "The group was organized by Moussa Salaniki and Moussa Abou Al-Afieh. They were the ones who brought the Priest (Father Thomas)."

Q: "Where did you slay him?"

A: "In the new furnished room, above the square shaped hall."

Q: "Who performed the slaying?"

A: "Moussa Abou Al-Afieh and David Harari were the ones who did the slaying."

Q: "How did you collect the blood at the time of his slaying?"

A: "A brass basin was brought for this purpose."

Q: "How long was he left in the room after his slaying?"

A: "Approximately, half an hour."

Q: "Where did the cutting of the body take place?"

A: "In the second room, the empty one."

Q: "Who did the cutting up of the body?"

A: "We all participated in the cutting with Murad Al-Fattal."

Q: "Where did you place the body after you finished? And who did away with it?"

A: "The barber and the servant placed the pieces in a jute sack of white color with a shade of blue. Then they carried it away and disposed of it."

Q: "At what time was the slaying carried out? When did you finish?"

A: "Between half past one and four o'clock (Arabic time)."

Q: "Did all of you sleep in the house after that? Or did you separate with each of you going to his house?"

A: "We separated and each went to his house."

Q: "Were there ladies present? If so, in what room of the house were they in?"

A: "I think they were in the north room; but I did not see any of them."

Q: "In all probability the group must have this operation planned several days before the actual execution. Tell us what you know of this."

A: "The original group members, Moussa Abou Al-Afieh and Moussa Salaniki, worked together to bring the Priest Thomas with the pretence of performing vaccination against smallpox for the children. This was agreed upon two or three days earlier at Moussa Abou Al-Afieh's house. We brought him to my brother Aaron's house. There he was slain."

Q: "You stated that the blood was carried to Moussa Abou Al-Afieh's house. If we bring him and he denies this fact, do you have any proof

against him? Or proof of the place where the bottle of the blood was kept?"

A: "It is true that Moussa Abou Al-Afieh was the one who took the bottle of blood. I am ready to confront him with this, but I do not know where he kept it."

Q: "When Moussa Abou Al-Afieh took the bottle, did he put it in a box? How did he carry it?"

A: "He placed it under his robe and took it with him; he did not put it in a box or in anything else."

Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh was brought in and was questioned about the blood of Father Thomas, which they had put in a bottle, as to where the bottle was, or with whom? Rabbi Moussa answered: "It remained in the house of David Harari."

Q: "Did you see the bottle with your own eyes?"

A: "Yes! I saw it with my own eyes."

Q: "Does Aaron Harari know that?"

A: "Yes! He knows that the blood remained there, in the house of David Harari."

Aaron Harari was brought in, and was asked about the blood, and he answered that Moussa Abou Al-Afieh was the one who took the bottle to his house.

The Investigator asked Aaron Harari:

Q: "In what way did he (Moussa) transport the blood?"

A: "He took it in a white milk bottle, the type used for milk."

Q: "Was Moussa Salaniki with you or not?"

A: "He was with us. He is the one of us - the seven." (He named the others exactly as has been stated before.)

Q: "How was the blood delivered?"

A: "We (the seven) agreed to give the blood to Moussa Salaniki, who in turn was to deliver it to Moussa Abou Al-Afieh."

David Harari was called, and was asked by the Investigator:

Q: "Where is the blood bottle?"

A: "Moussa Salaniki received the blood, he in turn delivered it to Moussa Abou Al-Afieh in our presence. The blood was in a white bottle, milk bottle, the capacity of three of four pints."

Q: "Where is the blood now? and where was it placed originally?"

A: "It was placed in a basin." (David Harari confirmed that.)

Q: "Where did you deliver the blood?"

A: "The delivery was to the empty room in my house."

Q: "Why didn't you keep the blood with you?"

A: "It is a practiced custom that the blood be kept with the Rabbis."

Q: "Was Moussa Salaniki present during the slaying?"

A: "Rabbi Moussa was with us during the slaying of the Priest Thomas."

The Investigator shifted his questioning to Moussa Abou Al-Afieh as follows:

Q: "Was Rabbi Moussa Salaniki with you during the slaying of Father Thomas?"

A: "Yes! He was with us."

The Investigator turned toward Rabbi Salaniki:

Q: "What do you know about the blood question?"

A: "I do not know anything about this subject. I have no knowledge of it."

Turning toward Isaac Harari, the Investigator asked:

Q: "Where was the blood bottle kept?"

A: "It was kept with Moussa Abou Al-Afieh."

Q: "Why are your brothers denying knowledge of this case?"

A: "May be they are afraid of being beaten."

Q: "Did you not all - the seven - participate in the slaying of the Priest?"

A: "Yes! We all participated in his slaying."

Q: "Now that there is no doubt regarding the slaying case, tell us where the blood is."

A: "Moussa Salaniki delivered it to Moussa Abou Al-Afieh and it remains with him."

The Investigator turning to Aaron Harari:

Q: "Why did you slay the Priest, Father Thomas?"

A: "To get his blood, in accordance to the religious requirements." (Isaac Harari confirmed that his brother was telling the truth.)

Q: "Why was the blood not kept with you since the slaying took place in the house of your brother David?"

A: "Rabbi Moussa Salaniki delivered the blood to Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh because it is the traditional religious obligation that the Rabbis keep the blood."

At this point the investigation stopped. It was Saturday 26th, Zul-Hijjah. The investigation resumed again on Monday the 28th.

The Investigator addressing Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh:

Q: "Isaac Harari and his brother Aaron Harari admitted that Rabbi Moussa Salaniki received the blood and delivered it to you. Where did you put it?"

A: "Rabbi Yaqoub (Jacob) Al-Intabi made an agreement with the Hararis, and the others, to bring him a bottle of human blood. Afterward the Rabbi informed me that the Hararis promised him to secure the blood even if it cost them one hundred bundles (five hundred golden liras). After that I went for a visit to the Hararis' house. They told me that they had brought a man to slay and drain his blood. I entered their house after they had already slain him and drained his blood. They said to me: 'since you are a wise person, take this blood and give it to Rabbi Jacob.' I said: 'Let Moussa Salaniki carry it and deliver it to him.' They said: 'You take this - it is better. You are wise.' The slaying was carried out at David Harari's house."

Q: "Why is it so necessary to have the blood? Is it true that they put it in the bread? Do all Jews eat from that?"

A: "It is the established traditional religious custom to put blood in the bread for the religious leadership not for the common people. As to the way the bread is made, Rabbi Jacob Al-Intabi remains at the bakery the night of Yom Kippur. The Believers then come to him with flour for bread. He then mixes the blood into the dough to make bread without their knowledge. Afterwards he returns to them the bread he has made from their flour."

Q: "Did you ask Rabbi Jacob if he sent the bread to the Jews living in Damascus or if he sent it to other countries?"

A: "Rabbi Jacob told me that he sent some of it to Baghdad."

Q: "Does he have established communication and contact with Baghdad regarding this matter?"

A: "That is what Rabbi Jacob told me."

Q: "Is it true that you cut the body of the Priest into many pieces?"

A: "I took the bottle of the blood and left at the time when the other remained in the house. I did not know about their plan to cut the body into pieces. All I knew was that they wanted to bury it. David Harari told me that they were going to bury the body under the stairway in his house so that no one would know about it. It seemed that after the news spread they decided to cut the body, break the bones, and throw them in the Salty River."

Q: "Is it true what is being said regarding Soliman, the barber, holding him (the Priest) down during the slaying?"

A: "I saw all of them gathered around the Priest. Soliman, the barber, and Murad Al-Fattal, the servant, were with them. They slew him with the expressed feeling of pleasure on their faces because they felt that they were performing the teachings of their religion."

Q: "Did anybody know that you gave the blood to Rabbi Jacob?"

A: "Nobody knew except myself and my companions. I took the bottle that night and gave it to him in the library room of his house. Then I returned to my house."

Q: "Was the original agreement to slay a Priest or a Christian? How was the selection of the Priest Thomas Al-Capuci, in particular, was made?"

A: "The agreement was that any Christian would do. When the selection fell on the Priest I said to them leave him alone because his absence will draw the attention and inquires. They refused. Then they brought him and slew him."

Q: "And what about the Priest's servant Ibrahim Amarah? Do you know who slew him?"

A: "I do not know anything except what is related to the case of the Priest Thomas."

Q: "The Priest's servant, Ibrahim Amarah, was searching for his master in the Jewish Quarters before sunset. It is unreasonable for you not to know something in this regard."

A: "Perhaps the Priest and his servant were both slain in David Harari's house. They slew the Priest first. I saw a man tied up in the second room. I think he was the servant."

Q: "Can you recover the body of the servant so that we may be able to believe your statements?"

A: "I do not know anything about the body of the servant because getting rid of the body was the servant's job."

Q: "Yesterday you said that the blood was in your house and that it was in the cabinet. When the search for it was conducted nothing was found. Today you claim that you gave it to Rabbi Jacob Al-Intabi. Why the contradiction in your statements?"

A: "I did not confess the truth in the earlier investigation because I was afraid that my image and reputation among the Jews would be damaged. I am excused for not telling the truth because confessions are forbidden from a religious point of view."

David Harari showed some hesitation in his confession when he was asked the reasons for that. He said that what he admitted previously was the truth, and that he resorted to his denial out of fear. He confirmed that the blood was given to Moussa Abou Al-Afieh by Moussa Salaniki.

Aaron Harari was asked about that too and he replied that: "Rabbi Jacob Intabi talked to seven of us and said that he needed human blood for making the bread. Since Priest Thomas always visits the neighborhood, bring him by on any excuse and slay him and get his blood."

"He talked to us regarding this matter in the Synagogue. Thus we worked a few days later on the preparation of bringing the Priest Thomas to our house on the pretense of giving smallpox vaccination. He was slain and his blood taken by Moussa Salaniki in order to deliver it to Moussa Abou Al-Afieh, so that later he would hand it over to Rabbi Jacob."

The Investigator compared the confessions. They were found to be identical. The Committee then concluded that: "They - the accused - slew the Priest Thomas Al-Capuci to obtain his blood for the purpose of making The Bread of Zion."

The Patriarchate Magazine, VII, Vol. 1, January 15, 1933, pp. 25-32. In the footnotes of the first page there appears the following: "The reason for such actions committed by the Jews center around three points: 1. Their hatred toward the Christians; 2. their need for human blood to practice magic; and 3. the doubt of the Rabbis and the religious leaders that Jesus, the Son of Mary, was the true Christ. Thus, through blood shed of his followers, they would be assured of their own salvation from eternal death." See the Report of Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh.

IV

THE SLAYING OF THE SERVANT IBRAHIM AMARAH

Continued - Investigation Record of Saturday 26, Zul-Hijjah, 1255 H (March 1, 1840).

The Investigator addressing the servant Murad Al-Fattal:

Q: "You say that you left after sunset to send the barber, and that you did not return to the house until after Isha. And that you saw the slain Priest in the empty room after his clothes had been removed. Where did you spend the time between these events?"

A: "I worked on recording the monies I had spent in running my master's house."

Q: "What kind of expenses require that much time? Do you not see that this is not a logical statement which can be accepted? You are a servant, and therefore you must do whatever you are ordered to do. You should not worry or be afraid to tell the truth, especially since you have been promised by the Governor a grant of pardon to tell the truth. What would happen if His Excellency, the Governor, were to order examination of the expenses which you said that you recorded and it was discovered that you have been lying? Then all of your statements would be false."

A: "But why would the Governor care about who recorded the expenses?"

The Investigator responded: "So he could be sure that you are telling the truth as to what you did during your absence from your master's house, during this period of time."

The servant said: "The truth is that my master sent me to Meyer Farhi, Murad Farhi, and Aaron Islamboli to warn them to be alert; that the Priest's servant might come looking for his master. If so, they must do whatever is necessary in order not to reveal or make known their secret. I stayed with them after I sent the barber to my master's house because they request this of me."

Q: "How did you contact each one of them? And what did they do after you delivered the warning to them?"

A: "First I went to Murad Farhi. I found him at his house in the company of Isaac Picciotto.[1] I

[1] Isaac Picciotto was an employee of the Austrian Embassy, and enjoys the protective custody of the Austrian Government - through the Austrian Consul's Office in Damascus. The Austrian Consul was not aware of Isaac Picciotto's involvement in the crime, and was very fair and cooperative in his actual participation with the Investigation Committee. But later he became partial in his defense on behalf of the accused murderers and tried to mislead the investigator's work.

informed him of the message in front of Isaac Picciotto. He replied: "Well! Go to your master." Then I went to Aaron Islamboli's house. I found him alone in his room, eating his supper. I gave him the message regarding the Priest's servant. He said. "Go to your work." But then he asked me who else was to be notified regarding the matter?" I told him. Then I left his house." I then went to Meyer Farhi's house in the middle of the alley. I found him in front of his house with Aslan ben Rofael. I informed him of the warning message and he said to me: "I am staying here." Afterwards, I went to Joseph Al-Rayek's shop where I worked on recording the expenses. I stayed in the street killing time as long as I could in order to be late in returning. When I returned, about Isha time, to my master's house I found the Priest slain and naked, as I have previously stated."

The Investigator then asked:

Q: Tell us what you know regarding the information you obtained from the leaders of the community in the question of the Priest's servant, Ibrahim Amarah, from the time of the slaying until the time of your arrest."

The servant answered:

A: "On Thursday morning, one day after the incident took place, I came to David Harari's house. The following were present: Aaron Islamboli, Isaac Picciotto, Murad Farhi, Aslan ben Fufael, and Meyer Farhi. Also present were David and his brothers Aaron and Isaac; and Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh and Joseph Lifyado. They stayed in the house for about two hours - from three to five o'clock, Arabic Time)."

Q: "Did you hear what they were talking about?"

A: "I do not remember what was said because I was busy preparing the tobacco and the water-pipes."

The Investigator responded by saying:

"Murad! This is not logical since you yourself carried your master's warning to Murad Farhi, Aaron Islamboli, and Meyer Farhi: "to be careful of the Priest's servant." You say that you do not know where they kept him, and how they disposed of him. Ibrahim Amarah, the servant, and the Priest are missing. You are the one who warned the other three men as you were ordered to do by your master. You told them to do whatever was necessary so that the news would not spread. Give us your true testimonial statement of exactly what happened so that you may obtain complete pardon!"

Murad AL-Fattal answered:

"I heard Meyer Farhi talking to the others who were meeting in my master's house on Thursday. I learned that they had dscovered the servant, Ibrahim Amarah going around looking for his master, the Priest Thomas. And that the five men: Aaron Islamboli, Murad Farhi, Meyer Farhi, Aslan ben Rofael, and Isaac Picciotto brought him into the house. They said to him: 'Enter the house. Your master is inside giving the vaccine against smallpox to the boy.' By this method they brought him inside. That's what I heard."

Q: "Undoubtedly, you must have heard of what they did with the servant. Who helped in his slaying?"

A: "I was unable to hear all the talking. I am a servant and I was busy serving the group. All that I know is that they did to him exactly what they had done to the Priest before him. They also threw him in the Salty River through the flowing stream which ends in the River."

Q: "How could Meyer Farhi and his companions say that they slew the servant the same was as the Priest when they had no knowledge as to how their friends disposed of the Priest?"

A: "They asked the others about the slaying of the Priest and were told how he had been slain and his remains disposed of. When they learned of this, master Meyer said that they in turn would repeat what had happened to the Priest with his servant; they would dispose of the servant by throwing his remains in the ditch which empties directly into the River."

Q: "Were the five which you mentioned by name alone or were there others in their company? Who works as a servant at Meyer Farhi's house? What is his name?"

A: "I know of no one other than these five who took part in this operation. I do not know whether the servant who works in the Meyer's house knew of this incident. The servant is a boy under the age of twelve years. His name is Obeid Al-Fags."

Q: "Do you think that the barber, Soliman Saloom, knew anything about the servant of the Priest?"

A: "The barber knew nothing regarding him. Because when my master sent me he instructed me to say nothing about the story of the Priest-

no, of the warning I was to deliver to the party regarding his servant. I do not think that the barber knew anything regarding the events in regard to the slaying of the Priest's servant."

The Assistant to the French Consul, Mr. Beaudin asked: "How did you meet Murad Farhi when you went to his house? How did you find him?" Murad Al-Fattal answered: "I entered Murad's house after sunset, before dark. I found him eating his supper, Isaac Picciotto was with him. I gave them the warning regarding the servant of the Priest."

The Governor, Sharif Pasha, asked: "How did your master know that the servant of the Priest would come to the neighborhood looking for his master?" Al-Fattal answered: "It is a known fact that the Priest always tells his servant as to the places he will be visiting. Therefore, they concluded that most likely the servant would come looking for his master. That is why they sent me with the warning in this regard."

The investigation ended at this point for the day, then was resumed on Friday, Muharram, 1, 1256 H. When the investigation resumed Mr. Isaac Picciotto was brought in accompanied by Mr. Joseph Ayrouth, the representative of the Austrian Consul to Syria. The Investigator asked Isaac Picciotto: "Tell us what you know regarding the slaying of the Priest Thomas according to the confession of David Harari's servant. Also what you know regarding David Harari's report in regard to the slaying of the Priest, and his warning mission regarding the servant of the Priest as stated in the Saturday Report on the 26th of Zul-Hijjah, 1256 H." Isaac Picciotto answered: "On Wednesday, the day on which Priest Thomas disappeared, I was accompanying His Excellency the Consul of Austria, in the field. We returned from our trip on fourth of an hour or so before sunset. With the Consul we went to my house. However, my wife was not home, so I returned with the Consul to the street. Then he walked in the direction of his house and I went to Mullim Rufael's house. I sat with his children for about half an hour, then I returned to my house and had my supper. I then went with my wife to Mr. Maqsoud's house because we were invited their for the evening. We stayed past nine p.m. and returned to our house. I knew nothing in regard to what the servant Murad Al-Fattal has confessed. I did not see him at all.

The questioning continued:

Q. "Al-Fattal said that you went to Murad Farhis's house and not to Rofael Farhi's house. Exactly, where did you go?"

A. "There are two doors to my house. The house is in a deserted neighborhood. One door leads to this neighborhood, and there is a bar opposite. The other door which leads to the Black Fountain Alley. Together, we went towards the entrance to the Jewish Quarters. The Consul then proceeded towards Al-Shaghoor district. I continued to Mullallim Rofael's house. If I had wanted to go to Murad's house, I would not have taken the long way. This confirms that I did not go to Murad's house on that night at all."

Murad Al-Fattal was brought back, and he faced Isaac Picciotto. The Investigator asked him about the fact of his confession. He reconfirmed

that he saw them go in the house entrance in front of the garden to the house. Then Isaac Picciotto cried: "He is a Liar! He is a liar!

The Investigator asked Isaac: "But why would this man lie and accuse you?" Isaac did not say more than "He is a liar!"

The servant Murad returned and admitted that Isaac Picciotto had also come the next day to David's Harari's house. There he met with Murad Farhi, Meyer Farhi, Aslan ben Rofael, and Aaron Islamboli. The time was morning, and they talked about the subject.

The Investigator asked him:

Q.   And how did they conclude their talk regarding the subject?

A.   They asked them: What did you do with the Priest Thomas? They replied in detail as to what they have done-as it has been stated before." The others asked the first party: "And you! What did you do to the servant?" They replied: "We first met in Meyer Farhi's house. The Priest's servant came inquiring about his master. We said to him: "He is inside.... enter." When he came inside we locked the door and slew him, as you yourselves did to the Priest. This is what they said in addition to "and we threw him in the outside sewer line to the Meyer's house. They stayed with them until noon (on Thursday).

The Investigator turned his questioning to Isaac Picciotto:

Q.   Do you admit to the truth of servant Murad's statement?

A.   Regarding Wednesday evening, it has already been stated. But as to Thursday morning, I was sent by the Austrian Consul's Assistant, on the Consul's order to get in touch with a Rabbi in Beirut for the purpose of bringing Shedade Islambaui, in order to talk to him and to secure money. We went to his house about four o'clock (Arabic Time), but we did not find him due to the fact that he had been invited that day to the house of Aslan Farhi ben Joseph. We stayed with the Consul in the street. I then entered to visit a sick girl (one of Salmon's daughters) named Aster in her own house. The Consul's Assistant was absent for half an hour. Then we returned to the house and sent for Shedade Islambouli, and we talked with him. Then we ate dinner with the Consul's Assistant present and left together to the marketplace about six o'clock noon (Arabic Time).

At this point the Investigator directed his questioning to the servant, Murad Al-Fattal:

Q.   How did you give your statement, and did you accuse Isaac? All that is required of you is that you tell the truth, and do not accuse. Give witness to what you know and what you have seen without lying or distorting the facts.

A.   What I knew is that these five men, Isaac Picciotto included, were together. As to what Isaac said about four o'clock, five o'clock, or six o'clock, I carry no watch. So I cannot pinpoint the exact time but I know that they came late in the morning, and stayed for a while. Then they left that day, Thursday, and asked Murad if the stream emptied directly into the Salty River. He replied that it did. How then could he deny my seeing him with Murad after sunset? It is so that he may absolve himself? Now I remember how I can refute his allegation. How can he deny and defend himself with proof when he is the one who came Thursday evening to David Harari's house before the arrest of the group. He sent for his uncle, Rabbi Jacob Abou A1-Afieh, and they stayed together until about midnight. And he told the group that night that "the barber, Soliman Saloom, had confessed to the incident today, and he mentioned your names. I think that you are going to be arrested tomorrow." Then someone and told him to go and see Murad Farhi. He got up immediately, but the group requested of him to send his servant, with the news, and to keep them informed as to what was happening, and why Murad wanted to see him. He with servant went. And after he met with Murad Farhi he sent his servant back to the group to inform them that nothing had happened. So they were relieved.

On the second day, Friday, Aaron went to Isaac Picciotto's house and hid for three days, to the point that his brothers thought that he had been arrested. After three days Aaron returned to his house, and his brothers met with him. They told him that they were worried because of his absence, and that they had thought that he had been arrested. He told them that he was in Isaac Picciotto's house. While they were talking the three Harari brothers were arrested at their brother David's house.

The Investigator then said to Murad Al-Fattal:

Q.   What is the name of Isaac Picciotto's servant who was sent from the Harari's house to Murad Farhi's house at the end of the evening party to inform the group not to be worried?

A.   The name of Murad Farhi's servant, the one who came and called Isaac Picciotto from the party, is Shehade. However, Isaac Picciotto's servant, whom he sent to the group so they would not be worried is Yehya Bzaini. He is a young man attaining manhood.

The Investigation Committe requested from Aslan ben Rofael Farhi and his daughter, and from Miss Leosha, Shehade Slambouli's daughter written statements regarding Isaac Picciotto's visit to them. Their statements were complete denials of any contact with Isaac and they indicated disharmony between Picciotto and Farhi's Family.

The Investigation Committee convened and resumed its work on Wednesday, Muharram 8, 1256 H. The Investigator started by asking the servant Murad Al-Fattal the following questions:

Q. You earlier confessed that you met with those who slew the Priest's servant when you went to their place. Who were those persons whom you saw and met with?

A. I went to Murad Farhi's house and I found Isaac Picciotto with Murad Farhi. Then I went to Aaron Islambouli's house and found him eating his supper. Then I went to Meyer Farhir's house and I found him with Aslan ben Rogael. This is what I have already told you in my previous confession.

Q. Aslan has denied this and has presented proofs that he came to his house on Wednesday afternoon, and that he did not leave his house until the next day. Tell us precisely and truthfully all that you know.

A. I saw Aslan with my own eyes, he and Meyer Farhi. I have no reason to accuse them. I said nothing other than what I saw.

The Investigator asked Muallim Rofael:

Q. Can you tell us the exact time when your son Aslan returned to the house on Wednesday, the day that Priest Thomas disappeared?

A. "He and I were in the Court House about ten o'clock (Arabic Time), just before sunset. He returned to the house and I went to the Council.

Q. Did you know what he did in the house?

A. I returned to the house at eleven o'clock, and he was still there.

Q. Where did you spend the evening on that night?

A. I did not spend time outside the house. It is not my habit to spend my evenings outside.

Q. Did Isaac Picciotto come to visit with you that night?

A. No! he did not come to visit us that night.

The Investigation closed. It resumed its investigations on Thursday, Muharram 9, 1256 H. The Investigator started by asking Murad Farhi's servant, Shehade Adl Ballas, what was his name. (He had been brought to the inquiry) Then said:

Q. Who sent you to call Isaac Picciotto, and what time was it?

A. My master, Murad Farhi, sent me to ask Isaac Picciotto to come to David Harari's house. That was about four o'clock in the evening (Arabic Time). But I did not enter the Harari's house. For this reason I don't know who was present for the evening gathering. Their servant, Murad, opened the door and I asked him to tell Isaac Picciotto that my master wanted him to come by his house after the party.

Q. When you went to call Isaac Picciotto was that before or after the arrest of the Harari's brothers?

A. It was before their arrest.

Q. Who was spending the evening with your master when he sent you to call Isaac Picciotto from the Harari's house?

A. There was none with him except Khawaja Bokhoor, the treasury attendant, The servants were in the kitchen.

Q. When Isaac Picciotto came to your master's house did he stay long?

A. He stayed about an hour. Afterwards he and Khawaja Bokhoor left together.

Q. At what time did Khawaja Bokhoor come to spend the evening with your master?

A. He came after the Isha.

Q. How did you go to David Harari's house to call Isaac Picciotto? How did you know that he was there? Was it your master who sent you to Isaac Picciotto's house and when you did not find him there you went to David Harari's house?

A. My master said to me, "Go to David Harari's house where you will find Khawaja Isaac Picciotto, and ask him to come to my house after the party." I went to David Harari's house and I found him (Isaac Picciotto) there as I have testified earlier.

Isaac Picciotto's servant, Yahya Bzaiti, was then brought in for questioning. The Investigator asked him:

Q. Who spent the evening at David Harari's house the day his master, Isaac Picciotto, spent the evening with him.

A. Jacob Abou Al-Afh, Shehade Lazbouna, David Harari, and my master Isaac Picciotto were all present. That was before the arrest of the Harari's brothers.

Q. What were the subjects of their conversation of the evening meeting?

A. They sent me to Khawaja Murad's house to ask what had been accomplished through communication with His Excellency Bahri Bey. He told me to inform them that His Excellency Bahri Bey had not taken any actions except to search some houses to find the criminals. I gave them his message. They asked me: 'Is that all?' I replied: 'Yes!' Then I returned and went to the kitchen.

Q. When did your master go to Murad's house? What happened after he left?

A. My master, Isaac Picciotto, left about four o'clock. Knawaja Bokoor, the treasury attendant was there. After that my master sent me to David Harari's house to tell the group, "not to be worried, that there was nothing except good news, God willing." I returned, and gave them the message.

Q. To whom did you give the message?

A. There were only David Harari and Jacob Abou Al-Afieh.

Q. Did anyone come calling on your master to request that he go to David Harari's house? Or did he decide to go by himself? At what time did he go?

A. He came by himself to the Harari's house. It was at the beginning of the evening party at the Isha time.

Q. Were you with your master the night of the party at Khawaja Maqsoud's house?

A. Yes! I was with him. Also his wife and a neighbor lady were present with him.

Q. At what time was the party?

A. It was after all had finished their supper meal, including the servants. There was some delay while the master's wife finished with dressing. Also the neighbor lady had to get dressed and put her daughter to bed. Since Maqsoud's house was far away we arrived there about one or one and a half hours after supper.

Q. On your way to Maqsoud's house you pass by a neighborhood alley. Were the gates closed or opened?

A. We went by the main road. There are no gates on this route, until we arrived at the Poors' Gate, which was closed. We knocked on the gate for a minute or two, then the night watchman opened the gate for us. After that we arrive at the Gate of Boulad Alley, where Khawaja Maqsoud lives. It was closed also. We knocked on it and the night watchman opened it immediately. We stayed at the party that night.

Monday's Investigation Report Muharram 13, 1256 H.

The Investigator began by asking Soliman Saloom, the barber:

Q: "What do you know regarding the murder of the Priest's servant?"

A: "I did not know any or connection with his slaying.

Q: If you did not know of his murder and have no connection with it, why then did you give testimony the last time that: "the servant was not with his master, and those who murdered him were not the same group that slew the Priest Thomas, and that the slaying took place at a different location with the knowledge of that group." This indicates that you knew the killers and the place where the murder was performed.

A: Yes! I have confessed to that, but I have no connection with it. Because when the servant, Murad Al-Fattal, came, the Priest had already been slain and removed to the second room. I asked Murad why he was so late? He answered me that they sent him on an important errand. I asked him: "What was this task?" He said: "The time is not appropriate now to talk about it." A short time later I was alone with him while we were working to get rid of the Priest remains. I asked him again and he told me that they had sent him to Myer Farhi's house, and to Murad Farhi, Isaac Picciotto, Joseph Farhi, and Jacob Abou Al-AFieh. I do not remember exactly if he mentioned the name of Aaron Islamboli or any others. I then asked him again: "Why did they send you to those men?" He replied: "Because of the Priest's servant, Ibrahim Amarah." Since we were busy and nervous, I did not ask any more questions."

Q: This confession confirms that you knew what happened in detail. Because you said that you did not ask more questions then of the servant. This indicates that you knew there was more information than what you had already obtained. Had you asked more questions you would have learned from the servant what you wanted to know. Undoubtedly, you arrived at the answers to your questions because you concluded from his answer to the first question the information you sought. Why is it that you were repeatedly asking him questions during your work together to get rid of the remains of the Priest's body, was it out of curiosity or just to pass the time? This was an opportunity to learn of the method which was used to dispose of the body of the Priest's servant.

A: The servant, Murad Al-Fattal, told me during the questions and answers that they slew the Priest's servant, and cut his body and disposed of it through the outside sewer line which empties into the Salty River. And that the operation was completed at Yehya Meyer Farhi's house.

Q: Did the servant, Murad Al-Fattal, say where they slew him? Were they assisted by a butcher? If they were assisted by anyone, who is it?

A: The servant, Al-Fattal, told me that they slew him (the Priest's servant) in the room next to the hall, and that they broke his bones

and threw the pieces in the outside sewer line; and that the servant, Al-Fattal, was present at the slaying until the work was finished. Then he came to his master's house where we worked together on the dismemberment of the Priest and the disposal of his remains as I have testified to before. I did not ask about who witnessed the act of slaying the servant Ibrahim Amarah, or who did the slaying. I do not know if they were assisted by anyone. All I know is that Yahya Meyer, his son Salman, and Moussa, and the others whose names I mentioned previously were present at the slaying. He did not tell me who wa: present and was not. I remember that he mentioned the names: Murad Farhi, Joseph Farhi, Yehya Meyer Farhi and his son, Rabbi Jacob Abou Al-Afieh (the brother of Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh), and the servant Murad.

Q: Why were you satisfied with his answers thus far? Why did you not ask him about the names of those who attended the celebration?

A: I did not ask him about the names in detail, but in a general manner. The names he mentioned to me, which I remember, were the ones I have already mentioned. The Servant, Al-Fattal, knows the details of the operation because he said to me: "we slew him and cut him to pieces, breaking his bones and threw his remains in the sewer line of Yehuda Meyer Farhi's house." Ask the servant, Murad Al-Fattal, because it is possible that he may have mentioned to me other details which I have forgotten.

The Investigator called the servant, Murad Al-Fattal, and resumed the questioning by asking him:

Q: Tell us what you know about the slaying of the Priest's servant Ibrahim Amarah in truthful way.

A: I am afraid of getting into trouble. Has anyone other than myself confessed to anything?"

The Investigator replied: "Yes! We have a complete confession. All you have to do is to tell the truth.

The servant confessed as follows:

I returned to my master's house. He asked me: "Did you tell the group about the priest's servant? Did you warn them about him as Instructed? I said: yes. The he told me to go back and see if they had caught him or not; and if so, what they had done with him." I returned to the Meyer's house. I found that they had locked the door from inside, so I knocked and Muallim Meyer Farhi opened the door. I inquired, in my master's name, if they caught Ibrahim Amarah? He replied that they had detained him. He asked me if I wanted to enter or if I wanted to leave. I told him that I would like to enter, and I did. I found Isaac Picciotto and Aaron Islambouli in the process of tying and gagging the servant. After Isaac Picciotto and Aaron Islambouli finished binding the servant, they put a white rag in his mouth and threw him down on the floor. This took place in the small hall of the outside house which

includes the sewer line where they later threw his remains. They had secured the door with a big piece of wood, Meyer Farhi, Murad Farhi, Aaron Islambouli, Isaac Picciotto, Aslan ben Rolfael, Jacob Abou Al-Afieh, and Joseph ben Menachim Farhi gathered around him. These seven are the ones who attended the slaying. Some stood by watching while others took part in the act. They brought a polished brass basin, placed it under the servant's neck, and Farhi performed the slaying with his own hands. As for myself and Yehya Meyes, we both held his head while Isaac Picciotto and Aslan ben Rofael sat on his feet, each held one leg and sat on while Aaron Islamboli and the others kept his back pinned down so he would not move until his blood was completely drained. About an hour after his slaying all body motion was completely gone. Then I left them and returned to my master's house, and I told him of what had taken place. The next day, which was Thursday, late in the morning, the above mentioned persons came to my master David's house with the exception of Jacob Abou Al-Afieh and Joseph Farhi. These two did not come.

Q: What time did the slaying of the servant Ibrahim Amarah take place?

A: Before the call of the Isha prayer.

Q: During your presence, did any of the seven leave while the slaying was taking place?

A: None left during the slaying. I left them when they were straining the blood, all of them were present when I left. I do not know who stayed or who left after that. I left them before the call to Isha prayer and arrived at my master's house after the Isha call to prayer.

Q: You mentioned in your first confession that your master sent you to Murad Farhi, Aaron Islambouli, and Yehya Farhi; and just now you have mentioned the names of seven persons. Did you go to warn all of them? How did they all get together?

A: As I stated in my previous confession, my master sent me to carry his message to only three, but Isaac Picciotto was with Murad, and Aslan ben Rofael was with Yehya Meyer. My master ordered me to inform Yehya Meyer. I was to tell that it was his task to inform the others. Yehya Meyer told me "We have your message and you may go."

Q: How was the servant, Ibrahim Amarah, taken into the house?

A: As I have stated earlier, which is what I understood what Yehya Meyer had said that "the five were gathered at the door. When the servant, Ibrahim Amarah, arrived inquiring about his master. Yehya Meyer told him that his master had been delayed, and that he was inside performing smallpox vaccination for the boys. If you want him come in. The servant went in. By this method they seized him and killed him as I have stated earlier.

Q: What happened to the blood? Who took it?

A: I did not stay to the end to find out who took the blood. At the edge of the steps there was a large white glass bottle, to be used in carrying the blood.

Q: It is not logical that while the group were occupied by the slaying plan, the servant had ready the bottle previously set out, because the blood is preserved in the basin until the completion of the slaying operation. If you saw the bottle there is no doubt that you saw the filling. Tell what you saw truthfully."

A: In fact, Aaron Islambouli did the filling of the bottle with blood. He held the bottle and they placed a tin funnel in the opening (like the one used by the sellers of oil), and Menachim Farhi emptied the blood from the basin. After the bottle was filled Aaron Islambouli delivered it to Rabbi Jacob Abou Al-Afieh's hand. At this point I left them. It was about time for the Isha call to prayer.

The Investigator then questioned Mohammad Afandi Abou Al-Afieh requesting that he confess as to what he knew. Abou Al-Afieh responded as follows:

I have nothing to add to my previous confession. All I remember is what the brothers said. Since I do not know them well I was satisfied with what I heard from them during their conversations. I did not try to be a part of their plot. I have already stated that Rabbi Jacob sent me to bring the blood. I took it and delivered it to Rabbi Jacob. After we were detained David Harari came to see us in prison. He sat with each of us, kissed our hands and said to us: "It is not possible that our governor (Afandina) would kill anyone without obtaining confessions from you. I beg you to refrain from confessing anything so that we may not be killed. If we are killed, "All" of us will be killed. As to the confession of the servant, say that you have no more knowledge other than what he has mentioned."

Muallian Aslan Farhi was summoned to the Governor General Office on Wednesday, Muharram 14, 1256 H. He was asked to tell all he knew regarding the slaying of the Priest Thomas Al-Capuci's servant, including what method was used. Muallim Aslan Farhi tried to deny many times any knowledge of the matter, but then he confessed as follows': "I stayed in the house of His Excellency, the Consul, and was determined not to become involved with this matter. But since His Excellency the Governor General has bestowed upon me an immunity proclamation, I am ready to confess as to what happened. I request from His Excellency, the Governor General to grant me his proclamation order so that I can tell the truth."

The Governor General replied: "It is all right, do not worry, we will grant you safety." And His Excellency gave orders for the proclamation to be written. It was as follows:

To Muallim Aslan Ben Rofael Farhi

In accordance with you request so that you may obtain a Declaration of Safety, we have considered this matter. Our objective is that you submit your confession regarding the subject of the missing servant of the Priest Thomas Al-Capuci about how and what happened to the servant. To secure this Proclamation for your safety requires you to confess frankly and clearly all of what you know regarding the matter at hand. Accordingly, with this reliance on our confidence we have issued our Proclamation to you. It requires of you that you receive and review its contents; to confess all what you know without the slightest reservation or fear. If you confess in this manner, you may be assured from us "God's safety and His witness," also the witness of our master Mohammad, Peace be Upon Him. You need not have any fear or worry. No harm will befall you and no punishment will be awarded, on the condition that you tell the whole truth without contradiction or lies. But if you try to lie after you have obtained this Decree, you will deprive yourself of this protection, and will suffer the consequences. Know this for a fact and rely upon it.

Muharram 14, 1256 H.

As soon as Muallim Aslam ben Rofael received his copy of the safe decree, he set about to put his confession in writing. It included the following: After the sunset call to prayer on Wednesday, the Priest Thomas Al-Capuci disappeared, I stood for about ten minutes with Meyer Farhi in front of his house. The servant of David Harari came and whispered something in Meyer Farhi's ear, then the servant left. I noticed immediately that a confusing look had swept over Meyer Farhi. I asked him: what was the matter? He could not respond outside the house. He knocked on the door and we entered his house. At that time Jacob Abou Al-Afieh and Murad Farhi were strolling and chatting in the alley. Perhaps they were waiting for the arrival of the Priest's servant. I do not know how they managed his arrival. Meyer Farhi and I entered the indoor garden of the house. We walked around in the garden and Meyer told me: "they are planning to slay a Christian." In a very short time there was a knock at the door, and Jacob Al-Afieh and Murad Farhi entered. They were followed shortly afterwards by Joseph Farhi, Aaron Islambouli, and Isaac Picciotto, who enjoys the protection of the Austrian Consulate. We all went to the outside garden, where they were in the process of pinning down to the floor the servant Ibrahim Amarah, over the small hall in the garden. Due to my age, I was not allowed to see the slaying out of fear. I held down one of his feet (but turned my head in order not to witness the slaying), and Isaac Picciotto held the other foot. Murad Farhi did the slaying while the others kept him (the servant) pinned down on the floor. Everyone held him from some part of the body. They drained his blood into a container, I do not recall what the container was. Then emptied it in a white bottle, which I saw in the hand of Jacob Abou Al-Afieh. I do not know who gave it to him, because I was not alert. After that they asked us all to keep the secret. I left and went to my house. I write this confession regarding the case of the above mentioned servant as I know them and submit it to our Afandi (Governor General), the Great Governor, I did not hide anything in this regard after receiving His Excellency's Declaration of Safety in my hand which guarantees that I will not be a object of any

interference. I beg of His Excellency to be treated with mercy, and not to be treated for what I have done. The final decision is all His.

Signed

Aslan Rofael Farhi

V

THE DENIAL OF THE AUSTRIAN EMBASSY EMPLOYEE ISAAC PICCIOTTO

Thursday, Muharram 15, 1256 H (March 19, 1840)

The Investigation Committee sent a memorandum to the Austrian Consul in Damascus, on Wednesday 14th, of Muharram 1256 H., requesting the dispatch of Isaac Picciotto. On the following day the Consul sent him accompanied by Joseph Zananiri, the Consulate representative. Isaac Picciotto had been called to ascertain what he knows regarding the slaying of the Priest, Thomas Al-Capuci.

The Investigator informed Mr. Picciotto as follows:

"The report by Murad Al-Fattal, David Harari's servant, and the confessions of the others indicated that you were in the company with those present at the slaying of Ibrahim Amarah, the servant of Priest Thomas. It is required of you to state the facts and tell us the truth."

Isaac Picciotto responded: "I was not present, and I have heard nothing in regard to this matter. I do not know anything about what has happened. It was an honored for me to accompany the representative of the Austrian Consul, Mr. Joseph Ayrouth to visit His Excellency, the Governor, at his office. There can be no doubts regarding my participation in the slaying, or of my presence during the slaying. This had been mentioned by His Excellency, the Governor to the Austrian Consul. It is possible that I may have some information about the matter due to what was reported by David Harari's servant. Especially so, after it had been confirmed that on the night the Priest disappeared, I was spending the evening with Khawaja Magsoud. I am at a loss now, because you are relying on false statements and accusations regarding matters beyond my knowledge. I have proof and evidence which will attest to my whereabouts from Wednesday afternoon to the afternoon of Thursday which will confirm that I had nothing to do with these false accusation against me. I cannot provide answers to what may develop daily from false statements. I can add nothing except my first answer in which I have explained how I spent my time during the whole period involving the disappearance of the Priest, Thomas, and his servant."

The Investigation continued as follows:

The Investigator stated, "In fact, we did not have any suspicion regarding Isaac Picciotto in the beginning. But our suspicion developed later due to the confessions of the servant Murad, and the others who were present with him. As to what Isaac has said regarding his spending the evening with Mr. Magsoud, and regarding the confessions of the others, in addition to the servant, we are ready to bring them for a face to face confrontation. As far as discrediting the witnesses, the servant and all the others are followers of the religious teaching of Moses, they are all Jews. There is no reason to suspect any of them. Especially when they have confessed regarding the participation of persons who are their own relatives of friends."

Isaac Picciotto answered: "We went to spend the evening with Mr. Magsoud about one o'clock after sunset (Arabic Time). We were the first to arrive. This statement is in regard to the time. As to what you have just stated regarding those who bear false witness, in regard to them being of the Jewish religion, Your Excellency knows that whoever bears false witness as a Jewish believer, leaves no doubt that he has deserted his religion. Therefore, as far as I am concerned, it is of no value as to what has been said falsely by my Jewish brother. I have only one statement which is "I do not know anything regarding this matter."

The Investigator then asked "Name those who attended the evening party at Maqsoud's house so they may be brought for questioning."

Picciotto answered "As I have said, we arrived before anyone else. The others started to arrive following one another until three o'clock (Arabic Time). Those present were: Botrus (Peter) Al-Jahil and his brother Gobran, Bisharah Nasr-Allah, Francis Salina and his wife, Michael Sola, Abdullah Al-Homsi, and Antwan Swabini."

The Committee issued a memorandum calling for those named by Isaac Picciotto. They ordered the dispatcher to bring them for questioning. The Committee also adopted a decision requiring that Isaac will be present during this questioning in order to confront him with his statements to the Committee.

The Investigation Committee continued by calling Muallim Aslan Farhi, and asking him:

Q: "Yesterday you wrote your report on the slaying of the servant of Priest Thomas. Isaac Picciotto has denied the facts as you stated them."

A: "Isaac Picciotto was present."

Isaac Picciotto asked Aslan: "What time was it when I was there?" Aslan answered: "The time was between sunset and Isha." Isaac Picciotto said: "I want to see what Aslan Farhi wrote in his report."

The report was brought in. Isaac asked that it be read. The report was delivered orally word by word. After the reading Isaac Picciotto said: All of what has been said in this report is false. It has no bases for truth. It seems that Aslan Farhi has become arrogant after receiving

his safe ordinance from our Afandi. He is taking a short cut to avoid being beaten or tortured.. If we were Egyptian subjects and we were accused, facing torture, such as we know of, and we obtained a similar safe conduct as he has, we might bear false witness also to save ourselves as he did. But God forbid us (the Jews) to do such a thing because this will destroy the sense of trust and honor in such situations. Upon my return to the Consulate this morning, I am going to call His Excellency the Austrian Consul and two witnesses to submit objection against this false accusation directed toward me. I will make a claim to this Diwan (Office) and to the Supreme Diwan which include those who are responsible over me: His Excellency the Governor General, and His secretary Mansour Tayyan: Mr. Massari, Head of the Medical Corp of the Governor General; Khawaja Chubli Ayoub; and Khawaja Beaudin, the Assistant to the French Consul in Damascus.

The Governor General, Head of the Investigation Committee, said: The subject of objection does not concern us very much. You should know that Murad Al-Fattal, David Harari's servant, has confessed. So has the Barber Soliman Saloom. Their confessions were in complete agreement, almost identical. Then came Muallim Aslan's confession which confirmed the complete agreement of all three confessions, in spite of the fact that they were separated from each other, in single and separate rooms. This is to say that in their solitary confinement with no chance of communication among them. If there were falsification or forgery, these identical confessions would not have happened. If Muallim Aslan is in the habit of falsifying, and here in Syria there are many Jews, why then would he not accuse them instead of accusing his own relatives and servants, even himself. In regard to what you have said that Muallim Aslan has become arrogant after he obtained a safe ordinance, and chose a short cut to avoid a beating or torture, you must know that the confessions came without resorting to beating or torture."

Isaac Picciotto replied: "You have said that my objections to your questions do not interest you very much, and I say that the purpose of the objections are to reveal the falsehood. As to the identical confessions we do not know this kind of forgery and have no experience with it. We have nothing except our first answer regarding the hours we spent from Wednesday noon to Thursday afternoon.

Then the Head of the Investigation Committee said, "We have no knowledge of the forgery of which you speak, and/or its purposes. You must explain to us the aim of this forgery."

Then Isaac Picciotto said: "This forgery is the work of some enemies."

The Investigator added: "You must identify for us those enemies."

Picciotto stated, "The enemies are many."

Those who were at Khawaja Maqsoud's party were brought in for questioning. They included: George Maqsoud, Antwan Swabini, Bisharah Nasr-Allah, Gobran Jahil, and his brother Botrus Jahil.

The investigation of these men started with the following statement and questioning to each of them:

Q: Khawaja Isaac Picciotto was one of those who attended your party on the Wednesday-Thursday evening when Priest Thomas disappeared. I would like each of you to tell us when (Mr. Picciotto arrived at the party.

Each man then answered:

1 - George Maqsoud. "I believe he came before Isha call to prayer. Although I am not quite certain as to the exact time."

2 - Antwan Seabini: "He came between two and half past two."

3 - Bisharah Nasr-Allah: "Picciotto came between 3:00 - 3:15. When he arrived all were already there (Sola and the others). With me were Gobran Jahil and Abdullah Homsi."

4 - Gobran Jahil's answer was exactly like that of Bisharah.

5 - Botrus Jahi: "I went to Maqsoud's house between half past two and three. When I arrived Picciotto was there."

Once again the Investigator turned his questioning toward Swabini: "Were you there before the arrival of Picciotto?" Swabini answered: "Yes, I was there." Then the Investigator asked George Maqsoud confirmed by saying: "Yes, he was there. I had already sent the servant to invite Khawaja Sola. The servant returned with him. I then sent Swabini once more with the invitation."

Then the Investigator called Yehya Bziti, the servant of Isaac Picciotto, and asked him again about the time they went to the evening party. In the presence of all he answered, "We went half an hour after Isha. The Gates were closed and had to be opened for us."

The Investigator then called Picciotto and confronted him with the statements of those who were at the party about his late arrival, and his involvement with the slaying of Priest Thomas' servant. He answered, "I have no answer except what I have already told you in the first questioning on Friday, 3rd of Muharram 1256 H."

After this event due to the denial of Isaac Picciotto, the Investigation Committee sent a message to the Austrian Consul as follows:

A Message to His Excellency the Austrian Consul to Damascus, on Muharram 15, 1256 H

Yesterday we sent you a memo requesting that Khawaja Isaac Picciotto be sent for questioning regarding the subject of the slaying of Priest Thomas Al-Capuci's sevant. Mr. Picciotto came accompanied by your authorized interpreter, Khawaja Yusuf (Joseph) Zananiri. The questioning of Khawaja Isaac Picciotto took place, and your interpreter, Yusuf Zananiri recorded the answers on behalf of Isaac Picciotto, according to his request. At the beginning of the investigation, His Excellency the Consul of France came visiting. He was a witness to the questions and answers. Then he started to speak with Khawaja Isaac in French. Suddenly, Khawaja Isaac Picciotto stood up, he acted angrily and behaved foolishly, claiming that His Excellency the Consul had insulted and belittled him in his conversations. He said that "he was no longer ready to answer more questions; that he did not want to listen to any more questions, that he will not accept the continuation of this case except with the presence and protection of the Austrian Consul." We said to him, that you yourself started the conversation with His Excellency, the Consul of France in French. You claim that he insulted and belittled you, but we did not understand anything you talked about. Even if it is true that he insulted you, this has nothing to do with the investigation. It is a matter between you and the French Consul. The Consul left the Diwan and Isaac Picciotto remained insisting on his position and refused to answer any more questions. He requested to return to you. We said to him that the investigation with him must continue. However, he did not agree. He left to go to your Consulate before completing the questioning. Therefore, it is necessary to inform you of these facts.

The Investigation Report of Saturday,
Muharram 17, 1256 H

The Austrian Consul's reply to the Message from the Investigation Committee: "We are returning Isaac Picciotto, with Yusuf Zananiri, to complete the investigation of the slaying of Priest Thomas' servant."

The Head of the Investigation Committee continued with Picciotto's case as follow: "You came on Thursday, Muharram 15, 1256 H. for questioning. The investigation ended when you were confronted by your servant, who stated that on the night of the slaying of the servant of Priest Thomas, you went to George Maqsoud's house about half an hour after Isha call to prayer. The Gates were closed and the night watchman opened them for you. At this point in the investigation you stood up and refused to answer more questions leaving for the Austrian Consulate. Now, what is requested of you is that you reply to your servant's statement. What is your reply?

Isaac Picciotto replied: "I am not obliged to reply to my servant's confession. But I will answer an order to explain to those in authority, who are foreigners in Syria and do not understand what life in Syria is like.

In the servant's first confession, he said that we went after the Isha call to prayer at about an hour or an hour and quarter. Then in his second confession he said that we went about half an hour after the Isha call to prayer. The servant may be excused for changing his confession after being jailed and frightened for his life. George Magsoud stated in his confession on Thursday, Muharram 15th that we arrived at his house at one o'clock after sunset, and that there was no one attending the party at this time. Then Swabini came and he stated in his confession that we arrived at George Maqsoud's house between two and three. Then Botrus Hahil said that he came at two o'clock and we were in Maqsoud's house. George Magsoud confirmed in the presence of Swabini that we came to his house about one o'clock. Later he sent his servant to invite Michael Sola because he was late in arriving. The servant returned with Michael Sola's apology for being late because Shandam Azar and Mullim Ibrahim Ayub were visiting him. Once more Magsoud sent after him. Botrus Jahil said that he arrived about two o'clock.

In comparing these statements it shows the falsehood of Swabini's statement and its worthlessness. Especially the Swabini is known to be of ill repute in public and private circles. As to the statement of Khawaja Magsoud, it was obtained twelve days after the incident, which invites mistaken judgment concerning the time. I request the recall of Magsoud and Swabini for re-questioning."

The Governor General, Head of the Investigation Committee replied: "It appears from your statement that you refuse even a response to your servant's confession on the pretence that he gave his confession under pressure in prison. I remind you that the arrest of your servant and his detention for questioning did not take place until after Murad Al-Fattal's confession regarding you. And that on the night before the arrest of the Harari's you were spending the evening with them. During which time Murad called on you and you went to visit him after leaving the Hararis. You sent your servant back to the Harari's house to dismiss their worries, and to inform them on your behalf not to be worried because there was nothing to worry about. Your servant was called for questioning regarding this confession and he has confirmed its validity. Then he was questioned again about the time of your visit to Maqsoud's. We separated him in order to confront you and continue the investigation without prejudice. In addition to that we learned that there were two well known Syrian merchants who saw you when you went to spend the evening at the Maqsoud's. We called both of them yesterday and obtained their statements as witnesses which we will now read to you so that you may be informed of the two witness statements. However, regarding your request that we recall Magsoud and Swabini for re-questioning them, we have no objection to that. Also we will call the two witnesses: Hanna Boulad and Ibrahim Ghorrah, so that you may hear their statements as they are written in their report.

The Investigation Committee called the above mentioned witnesses as requested by Isaac Picciotto for re-questioning. The Investigator started the questioning of Magsoud. He asked him in the presence of Swabini:

Q. State exactly the arrival time of Isaac Picciotto to spend the evening party with you.

A. I was not carrying a watch, and do not know the exact time when Picciotto arrived. The English Consul asked me fifteen days ago about the time and I told him that Picciotto arrived about two thirds of an hour after sunset call to prayer. I did not know that his arrival time would be so important, so I did not try to obtain the exact time. It also happened that I met Hanna Fraih at Asa'd Pasha Inn on Wednesday, Muharram 14, 1256 H. and he told me that there were four reliable witnesses who will confirm that they saw Isaac Picciotto coming to your house before the Isha call to prayer, including Ibrahim Ghorrah. Afterward I went to the market-place where I met Yusuf Ayrouth. He said to me that Hanna Fraih had told him what I have mentioned earlier. I told him that I already knew what he was saying. This indicated to me, from the conversation with Fraih and Ayrouth that they wanted to support his witness.

The Investigator ask Swabini about his previous statement. He replied, "Isaac Picciotto arrived at the house of Khawaja Maqsoud between half past two and three o'clock. When I went to Sola's house to invite him the time was close to half past three."

Isaac Picciotto replied, "I answered as to what has been related in my servant confession. But what is related to the witness of Baulad and Ghorrah I say that they has certain intentions against the Jews in general, i.e., to execute them. This is well known and widely spread, I think by both the Honorable

Khedivate and the Military Intellegence Administration. It is within the capability of the responsible guardians (the rulers), with their far-sighted outlook and deep thinking, to distinguish the truthfulness or falsehood of the statements of those ahawajas."

The Governor General, Head of the Investigation Committee replied: "You spent the evening of the incident in the Christian neighborhood (Quarter). Those who gave their witness (statements) mentioned earlier, regarding the time of your crossing, saw you them. Now you are attacking their statements. You say that their intention is to execute the Jews. That this intention is well known to the Honorable Khedivate and the Military Intelligence

Administration. And I say to you, "that the Honorable Khedivate and the Military Intelligence Administration have no knowledge regarding this matter. You must explain this to us so that we can look into it. But, you should also remember that there are some Jews who have given their testimony against you. Among those are Murad Al-Fattal (the servant of David Harari, Muallim Aslan Farhi The have given testimony on the subject of the murder of the servant of Priest Thomas. In addition Khawaja Maqsoud gave his testimony which you have refused to acknowledge. All of these witnesses are from your own people of the Jewish faith, well as those of the Christian faith. Give us the names of those who are acceptable as witnesses, those whom you wish to take the witness stand on your behalf."

Picciotto answered: "The fact that His Excellency, the Investigator, our Gentleman wants a reply to my statement of objection which relates to the accusation regarding enemies to the Jews makes it apparent that there is hostility towards me. I thought that the Highly Honorable Khedivate and the Highly Honorable Military Intelligence Administration were aware of this hostility as well as its purpose. It does not matter whether my belief is true or not. The fact is that this is what I think. As to the confessions of the Jews from my own religion, and the confessions of the Christians, I reject both of their confessions. I have stated earlier regarding the testimony of Muallim Aslan as it appeared in the investigation report on Thursday, Muharram 15, 1256 H. I have already replied to the statement given thirty days after the detention by Murad, the servant of David Harari, that his testimony is subject to a lapse of memory and a fear of severe beating or torture. These reasons caused him to accuse me falsely. As I recall in his first report he stated that he saw me with Murad Farhi when he went to is house to warn him. He also stated that he saw me the next day, which was Thursday, at three o'clock in the morning (Arabic Time) at the home of his master David Harari. He stated that with us were, Aslan Farhi, Murad Farhi, Aaron Islambouli, and Yehya Farhi. This negates the facts because I have witnesses who can confirm a time schedule for all of my activities from Wednesday on through Thursday noon. In addition to that Aslan Farhi met with Murad, the Harari's servant, in the Diwan of His Excellency the Governor, and disputed his lies in regard to Aslan Farhi being at David Harari's house. These facts dispute and expose the servant's false statements. If Aslan Farhi had actually been present at the Harari's house on Thursday he had no reason to deny it. And after these two reports by the servant Murad against us, another ten days lapsed before he gave his last report in which he stated that we were in Yehya Farhi's house, and that we attended the slaying of Priest Thomas' servant. I think this confession was made as a result of fear of being beaten and tortured. If he has not been imprisoned he would not have changed his testimony. As to the testimony of the Christians, we have proof of the time of our arrival which was before one o'clock, about the time of the Isha call to prayer. They have testified that they saw us at two o'clock. This confirms to us their bad intention and it exposes their purpose.

The Austrian Consul sent a message to the Investigation Committee regarding Isaac Picciotto.

The reply to the Consul from the Investigation Committee was as follows:

We have received your message on the 16th of Murharram 1256 H. which contained notification regarding the return of Isaac Picciotto to the Consulate, in the company of Khawaja Yusuf Zananiri, carrying with them a copy of the questions and answers. And your acknowledgement regarding the arrival of our report to you regarding the departure of Isaac Picciotto before he completed the investigation, for which he was sent. In your report you stated that you sent Isaac Picciotto to us to complete the investigation. And that you understand from the report that the servant of Khawaja Isaac Picciotto, Yehya Biziti, has been arrested and detained without your knowledge.

In answering to that, we convey to you the following:

First. On the subject of a copy of questions and answers, which you mentioned as arriving with Isaac Picciotto and Yusuf Zananiri, we would like to inform you that we did not sent them to your Excellency. Khawaja Zananiri took them without your knowledge. Second. On the subject of Isaac Picciotto, he came after an exchange of a number of questions and answers to him. We requested from our Turkish Clerk to prepare a message which Bahri Bey, a member of the Investigation Committee, was trusted to translate into the Arabic language. Suddenly, Isaac Picciotto created an artificial act of disagreement with Bahri Bey and said to him: "Are you the decision maker or the Pasha?" Then Bahri Bey refused to write because Picciotto had insulted him in and inappropriate manner. We were forced to delay our message to you until the tension and emotions created by this incident had been cleared up. We then sent Picciotto back to you. We do not know the reasons for Picciotto's argumentative behavior, whether he was acting on his own or with your permission. We hope to receive a response in this regard from you. Third. As to the arrest of Isaac Picciotto's servant and his detention without your knowledge. We would like to remind you of the contents of your message dated the 18th of Zul-Hijjah, 1255 H. which was as follows:

"We authorize you to bring every suspected person in the case of the slaying of the Priest, Thomas Al-Capuci, and his servant from this date forward, including those Jews who enjoy the protection of Austria and the Toscana." This was an authorization for the arrest and detention of whoever was a suspect in the case from the subjects of Austria and the Tuscana. The servant, Yehya Biziti is an Austrian subject. He was arrested due to the testimony given by Murad Al-Fattal, the servant of David Harari, who implicated him in his confession, that Khawaja Isaac Picciotto spent the evening with the Harari's, the night before their arrest, and that Murad Farhi sent his servant to call Picciotto at the end of the evening party; and that after Picciotto arrived at Murad's house he sent his servant, Yehya Biziti to the Harari's house to dispel their concerns. We requested Biziti to be bought to us to verify this testimony. He agreed during his questioning that it was true. The questioning continued including the time of arrival at the party at Moqsoud's house. He stated that it took place about half an hour or so after the Isha call to prayer. He was kept in detention in order to

confront his master Khawaja Isaac Picciotto. These are the reasons for his detention. Since he is a subject of your happy State, and had your authorization in this matter we say no reason to inform you.

Please be Informed

Sunday, Muharram 18, 1256 H.

His Excellency, the Governor General, went to the Jewish Quarter accompanied by Ali Afandi, Commander of the Cavalry Artillery Brigade, with the Governor of Syria, Ali Agha Tofunkgy. He also took with him some of his lower ranking officers, and Aslan Frhi and Murad Al-Fattal, the servant of David Harari. The last two were separated from each other. Upon the arrival of His Excellency at Meyer Farhi's house, he first called Muallin Aslan Farhi and questioned him regarding the place. He confessed saying that: "When Murad, the servant, came and spoke with Meyer Farhi we were standing in front of the door of the house. One on each side of the door. After that we went inside the house." His Excellency asked Aslan where the servant had been slain, and how he was placed in the diwan or the reception hall? Aslan pointed to the divan where the slaying had been performed. He explained how the servant of Priest Thomas was put down, flat on the floor, at the edge of the diwan; how he had been slain. He said that he (Aslan) was standing at the servant's feet, and held one of the servant's feet when they slew him. After he completed his statements, the Governor order him back to his detention place, and called the servant Murad Al-Fattal. His testimony was exactly as that which had been given by Aslan. This was the same as their previously recorded testimony.

Monday, Muharram 20, 1256 H.

After the Governor General, Sharif Pasha, completed his investigation he directed that the following message be sent to Khawaja Isaac Picciotto. It was as follows:

First. You have said that you found in the court a deliberate hostility toward you. However, you did not explain the type of these hostile actions, and you have not identified those who took this stand against you. Therefore, now you must explain this because the questions which I have directed to you contain the essence of this case.

Second. You say that you have responded to Aslan Farhi's confession and to his testimony against you, but your recorded answers do not negate his testimony. Therefore, this is the reason to preserve and present his testimony to be used at the appropriate time.

Third. You have said that the report of the servant Murad Al-Fattal was given thirty days after his detention, as a result of his beating and torture; that the accusations he has directed against you are false. But the truth is that he came to the court at the beginning of the investigation. He was questioned about the nature of the task requested of him by his master which was the calling of the Barber. He gave his testimony willingly without any threat, imprisonment or torture. The

contents of his testimony matched exactly the testimony by the Barber. After this he was released. He was recalled for the second time regarding where he went after informing the Barber. It so happened that his master, Rofael Farhi, was also present at the Diwan on some type of business not related to this case.

For this then he denied his first confession which caused him to be flogged. We then learned that his master looked at him with contempt, so for this he then decided to deny his first testimony. He then re-confessed as to the truth of his first testimony. He discerned a look of threat in the eyes of his master which made him fear that his master might kill him in the alley, if he confessed to the truth. He was again beaten for this reason. Since then he has not been an object of disturbance of harm. You have further stated that his confession was thirty days after the slaying. The reason for this delay was because at the beginning of the trial I was concentrating my efforts in an attempt to discover all the details of Priest Thomas' slaying. At that time it was necessary to use the investigation process in the case of his servant's slaying. After I had finished with Priest Thomas' case, I then undertook the investigation of the servant's case. When Murad Al-Fattal was asked what he knew about his case he accused you as you already know. You claim that there is a contradiction between what he has said about Aslan's presence at the Harari's house in the company of others on the second day, a day after the slaying of Priest Thomas, and to what Aslan reported of this matter, and that he denied being at that meeting. I see that they are both in agreement regarding the details of the servant's slaying at Meyer Farhi's house, in which you participated with the rest of the killers, because you held one of the servant's feet while Aslan held the other. The contradiction of Aslan's presence on the second day of the crime does not negate their statement that you participated in the killing of the servant. If you accept Aslan's testimony, you must also accept all of it and not just what is suitable to you while refuting that which is not in your best interest.

Fourth. You have objected to the statement of the two witnesses, calling their statements false and perjury. You yourself have established in your confession on Friday, 3rd of Muharram, 1256 H., as to how you spent the time between Thursday noon and Friday noon. It would appear from the contents of this confession that you were at George Maqsoud's house, on the evening of the Priest slaying before the Isha call to prayer, and that Maqsoud has supported your statement in his testimony. You have clung to this testimony saying that it has more of the truth than the testimonies of Swabini and that of your servant. I have called both, Mr. Ghorrah and Mr. Bould who have both stated that they met you that same evening in the Koukas Alley, while you were on your way to Maqsoud's house, about two o'clock (two hours after the sunset call to prayer.). These two persons are more trustworthy than Maqsoud for well known reasons.[1] In accordance with your own wishes, I have called the above mentioned person and have arranged a meeting with Swabini. He confessed, as stated in the report, that Fraih and Ayrouth forced him to falsify his testimony. This contradiction has

[1] George Maqsoud had earlier experienced a nervous breakdown; he did not recover his mental faculty completely. It is not known if the confusion in his testimony was due to lapse of memory or from bad faith.

caused me to cancel his two testimonies, the first and the second. Since it has become clear from the testimony of two trustworthy persons that you went to Maqsoud's house at two o'clock at night, it appears from the testimonies of Aslan and Murad that the killing of the Priest's servant took place between sunset and Isha, and that you were among the killers, and that you participated with them in the crime. Therefore, you insistence on your presence at Maqsoud's house does not clear you from these accusations. You claim to have arrived at Maqsoud's house one hour before dark, and you have concluded from this claim that the testimonies of Ghorrah and Boulad are false. Your reasoning for this is clear because if you accepted their testimony you would incriminate yourself.

Thursday, Muharram 23, 1256 H.

The Investigation Committee called the accused Isaac Picciotto the Office of the Governor General His Excellency Sharif Pasha, to give him the content of the memorandum which was addressed to him earlier in response to his behavior and the accusations against him.

Picciotto replied to these accusations by stating, "I absolutely have no knowledge regarding the details of the murder of Father Thomas and his servant. I have no knowledge at all regarding the false accusations and perjury against me. You have requested me to explain the source and type of false accusations against me and the explanation is in the hands of my superiors. I also consider my reply to Aslan sufficient. My superiors are capable of judging the truthfulness of this accusation or its falsehood. They also have the ability to look into Murad Al-Fattal accusations, as to their value, because these accusations came as a result of torture. As to the contradictions between the testimonies of Aslan Farhi and Murad Al-Fattal regarding the absence of Aslan on Thursday, the morning following Father Thomas slaying, in spite of the servant's statement, His Excellency, the Governor General has said that, "If I accept the testimony of Aslan Farhi, I must accept the entire testimony." But those who forced Aslan to accuse me forgot to match his testimony with the testimony of the servant, Murad Al-Fattal, in which these false statements and the hostility against me was disclosed. It is up to my superiors who are capable and insightful enough to expose the shameful plot arranged against me, in which I have no relation to the case at all. The Governor General has also said that he wishes to cancel George Maqsoud's testimony due to the fact that when he came on Saturday to give his testimony he claimed that Fraih and Ayrauth forced him to lie in his first testimony. After Magsoud gave his testimony in the presence of the English Consul, about twenty days earlier, he gave it as the truth. As to the statement of Fraih and Ayrouth, it is of no concern to me. My superiors are able to distinguish between the two testimonies. And if my presence at Maqsoud's house does not negate the accusation made against me, the matter does not concern me very much. Because the truth is that on that evening I was at Maqsoud's house an hour after dark, and God is witness to this truth. As to the rest of the accusations, they are all based an antagonistic collaborations against me and my superiors are not unaware

of the proof of that. It is not possible for the Austrian Government to allow one of their subjects (God Forbid) to fall victim to antagonism and false accusations. As far as I am concerned, I have no knowledge at all of that of which I am accused. All of it is false and lies. I trust God to help me to uncover the truth."

The Governor General replied: "I have limited my questions to the subject of the slaying of Father Thomas' servant, and have not mentioned the case of Father Thomas. You must respond to the murder of the servant. You claim that all of those who have accused you have committed perjury. I answer you by saying that, just to say this, without any support, is not sufficient to clear you from the accusations against you. You must establish the facts which show perjury. You also claim that the accusation against you by Aslan Farhi is not of him, that it is the work of others, those who pressured him to commit this perjury. We cannot accept this as it is based only on your claims. You must name those who forced him so that I may be able to take appropriate action against them." Isaac Picciotto replied: "Your Excellency has said that your questions were limited to the case of the slaying of Father Thomas' servant, and that you did not mention Father Thomas. I answered according to what concerns both cases. My reason for this is that Murad Al-Fattal claimed in his testimony that I also knew of the murder of Father Thomas. Since I am ignorant of the circumstances in both crimes, I have answered that I have no knowledge of either case. Your Excellency also said that my statement that the accusations are perjury is unsupported and not acceptable, that I must verify what I reply to this by saying that I have already established detailed information of how I spent my time between Wednesday noon and Thursday noon, when Father Thomas disappeared. Since I am ignorant of the facts that the crime took place at that time I have no other person to testify regarding the time I went to Maqsoud's house. My superiors will no doubt look with keen and sharp eyes into the truthfulness of Maqsoud's testimony and the other witnesses. As for your Excellency's statement that I must name those persons who made Aslan testify against me, and that it is not enough for me to claim that the accusations are false; I reply that Aslan's accusations are the main concern of my superiors, since they are more capable than I, and more qualified to distinguish between the truthfulness and falsehood of his statements."

The Governor General responded by saying, "When the servant of David Harari insisted that you had knowledge of the murder of Father Thomas, you replied that you had no knowledge of his case or of his servant's case. The servant has not accused you of Father Thomas' murder. I have not asked you about it either, but have limited my questions to the murder of Father Thomas's servant. And since you have answered that you have no knowledge of the two cases, I am justified in my conclusion that you intended to deny everything. As to the accusations directed against you, you have mentioned how you spent the time between Wednesday noon and Thursday noon, and you claimed that your story is true, that you have no knowledge about the crimes which were committed, thus you have no one to back up your testimony other than the residents of the house. This response to my questions is not sufficient. It does not contain what is needed to clear the accusations against you, because you are not able to establish you presence at that house at the

time of the slaying of Father Thomas' servant. Also you cannot refute the testimonies against you except with Maqsoud's first testimony, in which he stated that he was not wearing a watch and did not know the exact time. Therefore, his testimony is weak. In addition to the facts, there were other trustworthy and reliable persons who refute and negate Maqusoud's statement. You requested that Maqsoud be brought for further questioning, and when we questioned him he uttered what was a negation to his first testimony. It now becomes clear that none of your answers are sound or based on truth. Now you are saying that your superiors are better qualified than you to distinguish between the truthfulness and falseness of these testimonies. You are aware of the fact that your superiors were not present for questioning; therefore, they cannot distinguish between the truthfulness and falseness of the testimony in question. The investigation of this case is now in my hands. The judges know the value of Maqsoud's testimony. I see that in all you answers you expect your superiors to answer the questions which are directed to you. If you have a purpose or an aim in doing this, please explain it frankly to us."

Isaac Picciotto responded:

"Your Excellency has said that you did not ask me about the slaying of Father Thomas, and that no one had accused me of it, and that I want to clear myself of both crimes, even though the servant of David Harari first accused me when he said that he went on his master's order for something related to the slaying of Father Thomas and he found me there. And that he found me there on the following morning, Thursday, in his master's house. The first time in which I was met with your Excellency was related to the slaying of Father Thomas. At that time I told the truth when I said that I had no knowledge of this matter, and all accusations against me were simply false. I was not present that evening at Murad Farhi's house, and I did not go to David Harari's house the next morning. Whatever other that this which has been said is false; there is not a single word of truth to it. Your Excellency also said that I was not able to give sufficient explanations regarding the time spent between Wednesday noon and Thursday noon, the time of Father Thomas' disappearance, although I have substantiated this in detail in my report of Friday, Muharram 3, 1256 H. There is no reason to re-state it. As to Your Excellency's statement that Maqsoud's testimony in non-valid, I reply that this matter is not my concern because my superiors, who will question me will know very well the value of this testimony. Your Excellency has said that I refer all the questions to my superiors which are addressed to me in spite the fact that the final judgment is with them, in spite of their absence. They will rely on their own judgment of the oral report and the reports by their agents who are present. Their court has the final word and custody over me".

The Governor General responded to these statements as follows: "Your answers to my previous questions, especially those concerning the slaying of Father Thomas, and your response on Friday the third of Muharram in which you state that the accusation against you are not sufficient evidence. You have also made observations and objections to the investigation which I conducted on Sunday, Muharram 19, 1256 H. The observations and objections are attached to the oral report. There is

sufficient evidence to convict you of the crime. I have called you to provide answers to some of my observations so that you may hear some of the excuses and evidence which you claim are proof that you are not guilty. After you have seen my report, I shall send it to your superiors immediately. You have refused to provide answers to these observations, and have given answers which you know to be unrelated answers, that have no bearing on the case. I see it as my duty to attempt to make you understand the seriousness of the evidence against you."

At this point the Governor General handed Picciotto the Report of the Investigation, which had been conducted at the scene of the crime, so that he could read it for himself. Picciotto's response was: "Your Excellency says that the proofs are sufficient. It is not my prerogative, but it is the prerogative of my superiors, to judge whether they are sufficient or not. As far as the testimonies given by Aslan Farhi, and that of the servant Murad Al-Fattal, they are all lies and perjury. I think that their testimony do not apply to Austrian subjects. He who has the authority has the will too."[1]

Friday, Muharram 24, 1256 H.

The questioning of Meyer Farhi who was not arrested until the evening of Friday, Muharram 24, 1256 H followed the cross examination of Picciotto.

The Governor General: "Tell us, clearly, what happened in your house to the servant of Father Thomas, Ibrahim Amarah. This question is being addressed to you because it has been established by the testimonies of Aslan Farhi and Murad Al-Fattal who were with you; their testimonies were identical. Now tell us the truth so that you may save yourself the prospect of a beating."

Meyer Farhi answered, "I have no knowledge of this matter at all. All I know is that on Friday, I bought a bundle of pearls from Francis Faroun. He told me about the disappearance of Father Thomas and his servant. That is all I know about the case."

The Governor General responded, "What would be your answer if we were to bring Aslan Farhi and Murad Al-Fattal, the Harari's servant, and they testify in your presence against you?" He answered by replying, "I would say that they are crazy and have lost the

[1] The uproar of this crime spread all over Damascus to the point that David Harari blamed George Anjouri for pinning the accusation on the Jews by the Christians, as it was stated in the Investigation Report on Father Thomas.

faculty of sound mind required for thinking."

Then Murad Al-Fattal was brought in and was informed of Meyer Farhi's denial. The Governor General told him, "Meyer Farhi says that you are crazy and a liar. What is your reply to him?"

Murad Al-Fattal replied, "If the events had not occurred as I have explained, I would have changed my testimony during the forty days I spent in jail. The one who is crazy is the one who changes his testimony frequently. This is proof that I am not crazy."

Murad Al-Fattal then began by re-relating the details of the crime as they have developed, in front of Meyer Farhi, until he reached the point when he said, "My master sent me to the homes of Murad Farhi, Aaron Islambouli, and to your home. When I arrived at your house I saw you with Aslan Farhi. He was reclined against the right post and you were against the left post." At this point Meyer Farhi interrupted him by saying, "Where? On the door?" Murad Al-Fattal replied, "Yes sir."

Meyer Farhi realized that his question indicates that Murad Al-Fattal was telling the truth. Murad Al-Fattal continued his detailed description of the crime as it had happened. When he reached the subject of the blood he said that he picked up a vessel called Bousah in Hebrew. Afterward the blood was transferred to a bottle. Meyer Farhi interrupted him by objecting, "Perhaps you are one of those knowledgeable of the secrets of the religion. If you know all of these matters, then perhaps nothing is hidden from you."

The Governor General then asked Meyer Farhi, "Who other than you would be entrusted these kinds of religious secrets?" He answered, "This man is not of the class to whom such secrets are trusted. He would not know about the murder of Father Thomas and his servant."

After this Aslan Farhi was brought in and he gave his testimony in the presence of Meyer Farhi who reacted thusly, "The Judgment and the Divine Decree are in the hands of those with Absolute Power. As for myself, I do not know anything about these matters."

The Governor General said, "I see that you have no respect for the statements of the servant Murad Al-Fattal. You take them very lightly. If you do not value his statements then respond to the testimony of Aslan Farhi, whose statement was identical to that of Murad Al-Fattal, which you have just heard." He responded, "I have no knowledge of all this, and I am completely ignorant of it." The Governor General replied by saying, "Let us assume that you did not murder Father Thomas' servant, and that you do not know anything about the crime. Now, tell us where you were at the time of sunset on Wednesday, and Friday." He replied, "Those are Prayer Times. I was in the Synagogue."

The Governor General then asked, "Who was/were nearby you in the Synagogue?" To this he responded, "I do not remember."

The Governor General persisted in his questioning, while all the time Meyer Farhi refused to answer. Finally he said. "If you mentioned a person as being present and that person says that he was not present, what would be the result?" The Governor General's reply to that was, "Let us suppose, for the moment, that what Aslan Farhi and Murad Al-

Fattal have said are false, and that they have perjured themselves; and all of our investigation is based on false statements while you alone are telling the truth. The least you can do is to tell us where you were at that hour, and who you were with. Is that too much to ask of you?"

However, Meyer Farhi still clung firmly to his first answers. The Governor General resumed by stating. "If I were in your place, I would certainly remembered the person who were praying with me on Friday, even if two or three weeks had passed. Even if it had not crossed my mind at the time that I would be asked about it later as you are. How is it that you do not try to remember who was with you., in order to clear yourself of the accusations which cast doubts and suspicions regarding your involvement in this crime. Were you not aware that you would be asked about the crime? If what you say is true, undoubtedly you would have remembered those persons. Since you do not, therefore the accusation against you will be considered as true."

Meyer Farhi answered, "I have said that I do not remember even though Rofael Douk and Moussa Abou Al-Afieh saw me at the Synagogue."

The response by the Governor General to this was, "If I now call these two men and asked them, and if they do not agree with that you have said, and if they declare frankly tilt they did not go on that day to the Synagogue, how will you respond to that?" Meyer Farhi said, "Probably they have forgotten, or they did not pay attention regarding my presence."

The Governor General continued, "On what side of the Synagogue were you at that time? Were you on the east, west, north or south side of the Synagogue?" He responded, "I do not remember where I was."

The Investigator then called Rofael Douk and asked him, "Is it your habit to attend the Synagogue every evening?" Rofael Douk answered, "I depends on my work. If I am late in leaving my place of work I do not go. Also, I do not go if it is necessary for me to go to my shop early which happens to me two or three times in a week." The Governor General asked, "Were you at the Synagogue the evening of the disappearance of Father Thomas?" He replied, "Due to a death in the family Joseph Lifyado did not leave his house that day. So I went to his home that evening to console him for the death of his daughter. Due to the death I remember the sunset call to prayer as I was in the Western Quarters at that time. When I arrived at Joseph's house I found Metta Kibreet and another person from Rashayya with him. We said our prayers in his home, under the balcony. I stayed with him until about the time for the Isha call to prayer I then returned to my house, drank coffee, smoked Navgileh, and stayed home in order to rest."

After this, the Investigator called Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh who had converted to Islam and had taken the Muslim name of Mohammad Afandi Al-Muslimani for himself. The Investigator asked him, "Was it your habit

to go to the Synagogue every evening before you become a Muslim or did you pray at home?"

Moussa Abou Al-Afieh replied, "Usually I prayed at the Synagogue which is as the Ifrange (French) Synagogue. Sometimes I pray at home or at the Inn."

The Governor General then stated, "It had been said of you that you were at the Synagogue on the day Father Thomas disappeared." He responded, "I was not at the Synagogue that evening. However, I was at the house of David Harari." He replied, "Sunset, or a quarter of an hour after the sunset call to prayer."

Meyer Farhi was then brought in and asked how he would reply to the statements of these witnesses. He answered, "I do not remember the persons who were at the Synagogue." The Governor General responded by asking, "How is it then that you have said that these two men were at the Synagogue when they both testified that they did not go to the Synagogue, nor did they see you there?" Farhi answered, "I thought they went and that they saw me. That is why I mentioned them. Perhaps they did not go. What should I say." The Governor replied, "You claim that you are ignorant about this case, and that you were not at home when it happened; now tell us where you were?"

Meyer Farhi answered, "I do not remember. I am unable to remember from one day to the next."

Meyer Farhi was detained for investigation. And on the following day, which was Monday, Muharram 27, 1256 H., the Governor General called him and requested his answer as to his whereabouts on the evening of Father Thomas' servant disappearance. He continued to insist on his stand while denying all knowledge of the crime. Yet he was unable to say where he was at the time of the crime. At this point in the hearing of those who were denying and those who had confessed, the Governor General, Sharif Pasha found it sufficient for him to issue a memorandum for the indictment of Isaac Picciotto. The investigation proceeded by calling others in the case.

The Investigation Record of the 28th of Muharram, 1256 H. (from Wednesday to the night of Thursday).

The Investigator started by asking David Harari,

Q. Where were the Priest's watch and keys kept?

A. I saw Moussa Salayankli taking the watch, but I do not know anything about the keys.

The Investigator asked the Barber, Soliman Saloom the same question, and his answer was, "Those who stripped the Priest of his clothes were David Harari and his brothers;; the rest were standing by. For myself, I did not come near until he was undressed."

The Investigator addressed David Harari as follows, "You and your brothers stripped the Priest of his clothing according to the confession of the Barber, Soliman Saloom. Therefore, his watch and keys must be with you."

David Harari responded, "The seven men were standing by also. The watch is with the Salaniki."

The Investigation Committee called Moussa Salaniki to inquire of him, in the presence of David Harari, regarding the watch. David Harari addressed Moussa by saying, "I saw the watch with him (pointing toward Moussa)."

The Investigator asked Moussa, "Do you have the watch?"

Moussa Salaniki answered: «I didn't see anything, and I didn't take anything, I have not entered Harari's house since the feast, I wasn't with them and I have no idea about what they were saying».

David Harari said to him: «Aren't you who took the watch and blood? Aren't you who gave the blood to Moussa abou-Al-Afia, and the watch remained with you?

Moussa answered: «I did not see anything, and I don't know anything..». Then it was said to him: Master Moussa, there is a collection of confessions against you, and you are one of those who took part in this operation, they gave evidence against you, and you are still insisting on denial. Just bring us two witnesses only to tell us where you have been when the incident happened».

Moussa answered: «I was at home, and my family testifies to my whereabouts; and I have got no other witnesses.

The investigator said: «This is not enough». Moussa answered: «I haven't got any one else».

Then the investigator directed his question to David Harari: «Did you give him the watch, or he took it by himself»? David answered: «When Father Thomas was undressed, Moussa stepped forward and took the watch. But I did not see the keys with him, and may be they might have been in his hands, but I didn't see them». The investigator asked: «You have mentioned that the other seven were standing during the time when the Priest's clothing were being removed. Did only you alone see your

brothers when they performed the work, or did the others give you a helping hand in the removal of his clothes?»

David answered, "We were all, the seven of us, working together in the removal of his clothes. We took turns, some of us stood by while the others did the work, and so forth."

The Investigation Report of Thursday, the 29th
of Muharram, 1256 H.

Isaac Harari and his brother David were brought for questioning. Isaac was asked about the watch and where it was being kept. He responded, "It was with Moussa Salaniki."

The Investigator said, "How was it being kept with Moussa Salaniki?"

He answered, "He reached with his hand for the watch and took it."

The Investigator then asked, "At what time did he take the watch?"

Isaac answered, "After we completed removing the Priest's clothes."

Moussa Salaniki was recalled and asked about the watch. He insisted on his previous position of denial saying, "I did not see it." He was then told that "This is David Harari, and his brother Isaac Harari. They have both testified that you are the one who took the watch."

Moussa replied, "They are lying." The Investigator said, "They swear by their own religion that you took it."

VI

THE MEMORANDUM OF ACCUSATION AGAINST ISAAC PICCIOTTO*

The investigation of Isaac Picciotto revealed his actual involvement in the slaying of the servant of Priest Thomas Al-Capuci, which took place in the house of Yehya Meyer Farhi. Seven other Jews were also convicted in the records of the investigation.

First. The investigation of the slaying of the Priest Thomas Al-Capuci and his servant Ibrahim Amarah started with the examination of the public auction notices of the Al-Hakim Tranoba estate. These were the paper which Priest Thomas took with him after leaving his church, to mount them on certain places designated for this purpose. This was in accordance with what was recorded in the investigations minutes of Zul-Hijjah 4, 1255 H. It had been revealed before that the Barber shop keeper, Soliman Saloom, mounted the auction notice, he was arrested and taken to the Government Headquarters for questioning. Immediately, after the Barber's arrest, Khawaja Isaac Picciotto frequently visited the Government Headquarters. He had no logical or official business which

* This memorandum was founded in Mansoortian's papers. He was married to a relative of Hanna Al-Bahri Confident to Ibrahim Pasha during Ibrahim's expedition to Syria. Hanna Al-Bahri had a major policy-making role in most of Mohammad Ali Pasha schemes for this expedition. This memorandum was originally addressed to the Austrian Consul in Damascus.

required his presence. These frequent visits inevitably drew the attention of everyone, including the Governor. When the investigation procedure started with the questioning of Soliman, the Barber, in the first session, (Zul-Hijjah 18, 1255 H) he confessed by giving the names of the seven men. He also confessed that Isaac Picciotto contacted him and asked him, "Did you confess anything?" When he answered, "No!", Isaac said, "That is what I expected from you," and left. Then Soliman, the Barber, said, "Had I known that he did not intend to intervene on my behalf, as he said that he would, I would have confessed earlier before I received my beating."

Second. The investigation minutes from the questioning of Murad Al-Fattal, David Harari's servant, on Zul-Hijjah 26, 1255 H. included the following: "On the morning of Thursday, the first day after the slaying of the Priest Thomas, five men included the following: Aaron Islambouli, Isaac Picciotto, Murad Farhi, Aslan Farhi, and Yehya Meyer came together in David Harari's house. The house where the Priest Thomas had been slain. These five are from the group of seven who were firmly convicted of slaying the Priest's servant. Isaac Picciotto's

presence in the house of David Harari was established. He was a member of the group.

Third. It was stated in the above report that Murad Al-Fattal's testimony gave details of the event which took place when his master sent him with words of warning to Mura Farhi and Aaron Islambouli requesting them to take the necessary steps if the Priest's servant comes looking for his master. This was so that no one would be able to discover the secret of the Priest's murder. When Murad Al-Fattal went to Murad Farhi's house, he found Isaac Picciotto there with him. He delivered the warning while Isaac Picciotto was within hearing distance.

Fourth. In the above mentioned report, the testimony of Murad Al-Fattal states that the five men, whose names are listed above, were in his master's house on Thursday, and that Isaac Picciotto was with them. They were talking while standing in front of Meyer Farhi's house when the Priest's servant passed by in search of his master. They said to him, "Enter, your master is inside giving smallpox vaccinations to the children." When he entered they took hin, and slew him in the same manner in which they had slain the Priest. His body was disposed of in the same manner as well.

Fifth. The same report details Murad Al-Fattal's answers to Khawaja Beauden. He insisted that Picciotto was with Murad Farhi, that Picciotto walked side by side with Murad, and he (Al-Fattal) told both of them regarding the case of the Priest's servant.

Sixth. The minutes of the investigation on Friday, Muharram 3, 1256 H. included the following: Khawaja Isaac Picciotto was summoned to the Governor General's Office for questioning. When he refused to confess he was challenged by the servant Murad Al-Fattal, and he argued with him regarding all the occasions that he himself had witnessed regarding Picciotto's case. Picciotto denied all accusations. Then Al-Fattal was warned at the fact that "It is not our purpose to throw wild accusations here and there, but to tell the truth." The servant still insisted on the truth of his testimony.

Seventh. The contents of the above report, on the same day, involved the questioning of Al-Fattal as to the place of the disposed remains of the servant's body. The servant Murad Al-Fattal identified the place, and then he said, How could Mr. Picciotto deny, and try to clear himself when he himself was at the evening party on the evening of Thursday, only one day before the arrest of the Priest's murderers in David Harari's house. He sent for his uncle Rabbi Jacob Abou Al-Afieh, who was later discovered to be a member of the group of seven, who participated together in the slaying of the Priest Thomas. On the evening of the party he told them that, "The Barber has confessed today and he has mentioned your names. I think that you are going to be arrested tomorrow." Isaac Picciotto knew this because of his frequent visits to Government Headquarters, as has been stated earlier. At that point of the servant of Murad Farhi came and asked Picciotto to come by his master's house after the slaying when he would leave for his house. He stood up and headed towards David's house. It was about five o'clock in the evening. The group requested him to inform them of the reason behind Murad's call and to send his servant in order to dispel their

concerns. Picciotto later on sent his servant back with words that there was nothing to worry about. On the next day, Friday, Aaron Harari went to Isaac Picciotto's house and hid for two or three days. This caused his brother to think that he had been arrested. When Aaron came back home, they asked him about where he had been hiding. He told them that he was in Isaac Picciotto's house. While they were talking about this they were arrested, as has been stated in today's report.

Eighth. The Investigation Report of Muharram 8, 1256 H. Murad Al-Fattal was questioned regarding his mission to warn the group to entice the Priest's servant into the house and slay him. His testimony was matched in all details including the statement that Isaac Picciotto was with Murad Farhi when he delivered the warning.

Ninth. The, Investigation Report of Muharram 9, 1256 H. stated that the servant of Murad Farhi (Isaac Al-Bullas) was brought for questioning, and he testified that he came in response to orders from his master (Murad Farhi) to request Isaac Picciotto to come to David Harari's house. This took place about four o'clock or little shortly after. Isaac Picciotto went to the house directly after this message.

Tenth. On the same day, the report states that the servant of Isaac Picciotto, Yehya Biziti, was brought to the investigation and he confessed that his master, Isaac Picciotto, went to Murad Farhi's house at four o'clock, in the evening, or shortly after, and that Picciotto sent him back to David Harari's house to dispel the group's concerns regarding the events which had taken place.

Eleventh. According to the Report of Muharram 13, 1256 H. the Barber Soliman was questioned as to what he knew about the case of the Priest's servant. He testified that Isaac Picciotto participated in the slaying of the servant Ibrahim Amarah. That he had knowledge from the Harari's servant who was involved in the process of getting rid of the Priest's body (the servant had taken part in the slaying of the Priest's servant also). When the confession was completed, the testimonies of both men were exactly the same in spite of the fact that they were separated from one another in their detention places during their internment.

Twelfth. In the report of the same date it became clear through the confession of the Barber and the servant of the Harari's house that they both knew about the crime due to their participation in the crimes. The Hararis' servant was questioned and he confessed to his actions. He also confessed that he attended the slaying of the Priest's servant by assisting in holding him down at the time of the slaying. He stated that Meyer Farhi and Murad Farhi slew the servant with their own hands. Also he named those who were present, including Isaac Picciotto, who, he said held down one of the servant's feet during the slaying. Among those present were Aslan, the son of Rofael, who held the other foot as previously stated in the Investigation Report of Muharram 13, 1256 H. He further stated that the slaying took place before Isha in Meyer Farhi's house.

Thirteenth. The Investigation Report of Muharram 14, 1256 H. In this report it is stated that Aslan, the son of Rofael Farhi, requested from

His Excellency, the Governor General, to give him immunity from persecution and to grant him a pardon, so he could confess all without fear. When he received immunity from the Governor General he confessed to his own part, naming those who had taken part with him in the slaying of the Priest's servant. He wrote by his report in his own hand. It matched exactly in all details the testimony given by Murad Al-Fattal. He stated that Isaac Picciotto held one of the victim's feet, and he held the other. He explained the slaying of the victim in details confirming that the slaying was completed between the sunset call to prayer and the Isha call to prayer, at Muallim Rofael's house, a notable in the Jewish Community. All of Picciotto's answers confirmed his attempt to escape from the facts that implicated him and constituted proof of his guilt.

Fourteenth. The Consul of Austria to Damascus, Mr. Merlato, had given the Investigation Committee written authorization to conduct its investigation at the time when the Committee of Doctors met to examine the recovered remains of Priest Thomas from the Black (Salty) River. These had been disposed of about two days earlier as detailed in previous confessions and testimonies. The Consul was in complete agreement over what he saw and heard, after seeing the Committee of Doctors' Report especially when it became clear to him the pieces of clothing were parts of the robe worn by the slain Priest. These fragments were exact matches of the kind of material the missing Priest was wearing. The Consul also participated in the ceremonial burying of the recovered bones of Father Thomas in the Church. He gave written authorization to the Governor General including their agreement for investigating any suspected person who were subjects of Austria or the Toscana. They were authorized to arrest and detain those suspected subjects for questioning if required to do so. In addition, the Consul, Mr. Merlato, and his representative Mr. Joseph Zananiri, conveyed thanks to His Excellency the Governor General for His concern and interest in this matter. The Consul was informed regarding the possibility of finding the blood in Isaac Picciotto's house.

On the basis of this and with the written authorization in hand, Isaac Picciotto was summoned for his questioning regarding the murder of the Priest's servant. The investigation established that Picciotto was one of those involved in the murder, and an arrest order was issued to detain him for investigation.

However, His Excellency, the Governor General received notification that Mr. Picciotto was being detained in the Consul's house. This was neither proper nor legal detention because there were a large number of Jews visiting the Counsul's house, and it is not known whether this was to meet with Mr. Picciotto or with Assistant to the Consul, who was a Jew himself, thus preventing the Committee from being able to verify whether they would be able to conduct their inquiry without this interruption. It was feared that the Jewish community was trying to bring about the Consul's intervention to dismiss the accusation of Jews and declare their innocence, in spite of the clear fact of their involvement.

The support which Isaac Picciotto received caused him to behave in a very crude manner. He dismissed all available evidence of his complicity as being lies. On Friday he made it known that he received a

message from His Excellency the General supporting his stance for dismissing this case against the Jews. His interpreter, Joseph Zananiri went to the Jewish Quarter delivering the good news of this, and it become known that he collected money to publish and announce the good news. Then he received a message from Alexandria carrying a copy of the Generous and Noble Order from His majesty the Great Khedevi Mohamad Ali Pasha in response to the petition presented by the Jews of Alexandria.

When Isaac Picciotto received the Khedevi's message he called a group of Jews to take a copy of it and present it to the Governor General, Sharif Pasha, so he would know that the Jews of Damascus had learned that they had been absolved from the crimes which is to say that the Khedevi did not believe the truth of the accusations against them.

Because the Jews of Damascus, however, were fully aware that it was impossible to refute, or challenge, the established and recorded findings of the investigation, they refrained from carrying the copy of that message to the Governor General. But, a Rabbi volunteered to deliver the message in response to the "wishes" of the Austrian Consul, Mr. Merlato, after asking the permission of the English Consul, Mr. Woody. This Rabbi, then at that time, had witnessed personally the freedom enjoyed by those arrested since their families, relatives, and even servants were frequent visitors to the accused ones in their detention place. This is what the Jews wanted to show from their movement, which was designed to show that they could achieve their goals over any obstacles. Thus, it is not unusual that they held fast to their denials which they had agreed to among themselves and thus ignored their confessions and testimony even when these were in their own handwriting because they knew that these denials were in their best interests in spite of the great crimes to which they had confessed. According to their religion and which they had acknowledged these crimes which caused them to be dissenters of their own religion as had been revealed in their holy books, which forbids them to commit murder in accordance with their own laws.

We presented our observations by our reliance on

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VII

THE LAWFUL USE OF CHRISTIAN BLOOD AND WEALTH

Contents of the Investigation Minutes of the 13th of Muharram 1256 H.

The session was held in the Office of the Governor General, Sharif Pasha. Those attending included members of the Investigation Committee, Mr. Beadin, the Assistant to the French Consul, Khawaja Chubli Ayub, a senior official of the Egyptian Government, and Rabbi Jacob, Chief Rabbi of the Jewish Community in Damascus.

The Investigator started by asking, "What is the position of the Jewish Religion, according to the Talmudic Commandments as to the status of non-Jewish nations?"

Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh replied, "The status of non-Jewish nations is considered to be that of animals. Following the example of our Master, Abraham, the Prophet of God, when he and two servants went to sacrifice Isaac, Abraham said to them, 'You stay here with the donkey. I will go with the lad.' From this, which is contained in the Talmud, it is interpreted as classifying the non-Jews as animals. Thus, the status of non-Jewish nations are to be classified accordingly."

The Investigator asked Rabbi Jacob, "And you, your honor Rabbi Jacob, what do you say on this matter?" Rabbi Jacob answered, "Our Master, Father Abraham saw God, he said to his people, 'Look!' When they did not see anything, he said to them, 'stay with the donkey.' This is interpreted in the Talmud as classifying the non-Jews as animals."

Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh, who was present and who had converted from Judaism to Islam, adopting the Muslim name of Mohammad Afandi Al-Muslimani for himself. He had brought with him The Talmud and some other Jewish books to deal with these beliefs, as to their justification in arriving at such conclusions. These books were available in the Governor General's Office. Rabbi Jacob picked up a book to read the opening verses in order to explain it to the Governor General. Mohammad Al-Muslimani responded, "He wants to read what they have written at the beginning of each of these books because they state at the beginning of the book what is being said of other non-Jewish nations, who do not know or worship God, the nations of ancient time. This is what Rabbi Jacob wants to point out and clarify to you." Al-Muslimani added that, "And in order to conceal their action or belief, so they can print their books in Europe, they leave a number of blank pages in their books. In this way they are able to mislead the public opinion in the West."

The Investigator then asked Rabbi Jacob about the subject of the omitted pages in their printed books. Rabbi Jacob replied, "Do you want us to put in this information including the name of Jesus, and what happened to him? And what should be mentioned in this regard?"

The Investigator continued, "You have said that 'after the Most Majestic God revealed himself to the People of Israel in the wilderness, that they believed in Him. And that those who failed to adopt the Jewish Religion it is lawful for the Jewish believers to kill.' Is that true?"

Rabbi Jacob answered, "It is true, because when the Almighty God revealed himself to the people, they accepted him by believing in Him. Anyone who renounces his belief must be killed."

The Rabbi was questioned further. "Is it lawful to kill those who work on Saturday?" Rabbi Jacob answered, "Yes! If he is a Jew."

Mohammad Al-Muslimani responded to this by saying, "So, it is lawful to kill the rest of the people of all nations if they refuse to work on Saturday because they have no more status than of cattle and are not entitled to rest. All non-Jews must work day and night. It is written in the book of Sanhedrin (from the Talmud) at the end of page 58. "Who works on Saturday of other nations must be killed without question or answer. And if a non-Jew reads the Torah he must be killed because the Torah is for the People of Israel. The books of other nations must be burned even though they contain the name of God. If a person, other than a Jew, were to write the name of God, even in the Torah. The Torah, if written by a non-Jew, must be burned."

The Investigator asked, "What is the position of the Jews in regard to the wealth of peoples who are non-Jews?"

Mohammad Al-Muslimani answered, "There are seven Commandments: One - Do not worship stars, planets and constellations. Two - Do not commit adultery. Three - Do not kill. Four - Do not steal. Five - Do not cut the flesh of a living lamb and eat it. Six - Do not mate an animal with one of unlike kind. Anyone (not a Jew) who does any of these, will find that his wealth is lawful for the Jews to take."

The Investigator asked Rabbi Jacob, "What do you say about that?" Rabbi Jacob answered, "When the People of Israel left Egypt, and saw that other nations did not apply or practice these seven commandments, Talmudic law it made the wealth of non-Jews become the wealth of Jews." The Investigator asked, "Do the Jews deal with the other nations according to this law?" Mohammad Al-Muslimani answered, "It is a known fact that the other religions, specifically Christianity and Islam have similar commandments and that they practice them. In fact they are identical to those in the Talmud. He who behaves to the contrary will be treated in the same way which applied to the other non-believers."

The Investigator said, "You have mentioned in your testimony that the Jews extracted the blood of Christians and used it to make bread. It is known by your belief that blood is not clean, and is forbidden by your religion even when taken from a lawfully slain animals. It is not lawful to use blood. There exists a contradiction between blood being impure and forbidden, and that of its being lawful if taken from a Christian human being, especially to make the bread for the holy day. Is there any logical or convincing proof which will explain this contradiction?"

Al-Muslimani answered, "The Talmud says that there are two kinds of blood pleasing to God. The blood of the Passover, and the blood of the circumcision." Rabbi Jacob added, "God loves two kinds of blood, the Passover sacrificial blood, and the blood of circumcision."

Chubli Ayub responded, "We do not understand very well how it is permissible to use human blood?"

Al-Muslimani answered, "The Chief Rabbis know by the codes given to them how and when it is permissible to use this blood."

The Governor General asked, "If a Jew said something that caused harm to another Jew or to other Jews, and to their religion, what would be his case?"

Al-Muslimani answered, "It is lawful to kill a Jew if he commits adultery, or does something which violates the belief or the teaching of the religion. This was so in the past, but now they (the Jews) consider him to be a deserter and they do not do anything to him, because his desertion has placed him outside of the religion. Also if anyone of them speaks ill about the Jews, or causes harm to any of them, or insults the Jewish Religion then for sure he must be killed. This is done even today in spite of their weak position because they consider him an enemy of their religion. There is no sin offering for this offence except death. The Jewish Religion relies on this practice in these days. For this reason I did not confess the truth, and I was unable to confess until I had declared my conversion to Islam.

The Investigator then asked Rabbi Jacob about this. He replied, "What he (Al-Muslimani) has said is true. The Jews would work to kill him directly or to cause his death by plotting through the rulers."

The Investigator asked, "And if the governors or rulers found that the accused Jew or non-Jew is not guilty, and they did not assist you with his killing, what would they do then?"

Rabbi Jacob answered, "This what our religion commands us. Therefore, we must exert all effort possible to kill him, and use whatever means available to accomplish that."

VIII

THE ROLE OF THE FOREIGN CONSULATES

The Investigation Minutes of Muharram 24, 1256 H. During the investigation process and the questioning of the suspects, a memorandum from the French Consul in Damascus arrived for the Investigation Committee containing the following:

"Muallim Shehadih Lazbouna was one of the Jews who came to our Consulate when the case of Priest Thomas and his servant became public knowledge. He pledged to pay 50,000 piasters to whoever reveals the killers. I learned that this person is a Government employee. Therefore, I hope you will send him to me for questioning."

The Investigation committee sent Shehadih Lazbouna to the French Consul for questioning. The French Consul sent a copy of the questions and answers which were used during the investigation that took place in his presence to the Investigation Committee. The contents of this copy are as follows:

The Consul said to Shehadih Lazbouna, "You came to this Consulate with some members of your Jewish community -- among them were: Meyer Farhi, Murad and Joseph Farhi, Aaron Islambouli, and known what was revealed regarding the slaying of the Priest and his servants in the house of David Harari and the Farhi's house, with their knowledge. We have learned that you are still committed to pay your share of the pledged 50,000 piasters. Do you have any doubts or suspicions regarding what has happened or what has been revealed?"

Shehadih answered, "The investigation procedure is completed and has attained its legitimate action. I have no doubt about the honesty of the investigation which was conducted in the presence of His Excellency, the Governor General, and His Excellency, the Consul. The pledge is due and I will pay what I have to pay.

The Consul: "What is requested of you [is] that you write down you answers without fear or partiality. Since you have no doubt about what happened, and they are well known facts, why are you keeping your pledge when it has become clear that these crimes were carried out in a wrongful and criminal fashion? Explain to us the nature of this pledge and do not be ashamed." Shehadih replied by reconfirming what he had said earlier. The consul then said to him, "Your truthfulness is clear. Since you are innocent of the accusations of the murder of Father Thomas and his servant, perhaps you have learned what is being said in your community regarding this matter. Tell us about it in details and do not worry -- especially since you were spending the evening at David Harari's house, the night before the arrest of the Harari's sons. Tell us who spent the evening with you at the Harari's house, and what they talked about?"

Shehadih Lazbouna replied, "We went to His Excellency's, the Governor of Damascus, when this matter developed, and pleaded for his help. He

replied that they would not interfere in this case. We returned to the Harari's house, then went back to visit His Excellency at night. Returning from there to spend the evening in David Harari's house. Among those present were Isaac Picciotto, Jacob Abou Al-Afieh, and the Harari Brothers. Our party lasted until about four o'clock at night. At that time Isaac Picciotto was called to Murad's house. Those of us attending the party said to Isaac Picciotto, 'Please inform us to dispel our worries, if anything developed regarding the case.' He later sent his servant to inform us that there was nothing to worry about. This is what I remember as to what took place the night before the arrest of the Harari's sons."

{NOTE: Sometime earlier, these men went to the French Consul, a few days after the slaying of Father Thomas, and asked his personal help and intervention on their behalf with the Governor General, Sharif Pasha. They wanted him to give them additional time to find the murderer. Then they requested from him, in order to dispel the suspicions hovering over them, that he announce, in writing, and through an official town caller, the allocation of fifty thousand piasters (50,000) of a prize money to be given to whoever discovers the Priest's body and his murderer. He accepted their wishes and ordered the mounting of notices in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim neighborhoods, and public calls throughout the City of Damascus.}

The Consul said, "It is not required that you answer what is not true of what you heard of the discussions during that evening gathering, or who was present there. There is no accusation against you for you to deny or refute. Why did you give me the five hundred (500) piasters in the wrapped bundle? What was your intent from this bribe?"

Shehadih answered, "My only reason for presenting this sum was to avoid falling into this problem."

The Consul said, "Did anybody tell you that, or did you think of that yourself? What was your reason for fearing to fall into this problem?"

Shehadih answered, "Nobody asked me to do it. I have the money, and I am a man of my word. However, if I am afraid to answer your questions on this matter. I am also afraid of so many questions."

The Consul replied, "By a formal memorandum to His Excellency, the Governor General, I requested you to come in order to question you regarding this case, because your name appeared in the Investigation Minutes in regard to your presence in the party at the Harari's house. For that reason I asked you about the matter of the slaying of the Priest and his servant, since you were among those who pledged to pay the reward if the two murdered persons were discovered in your neighborhood. You have acknowledged that you have no doubts about the honesty of the investigation, and in spite of this, you are determined to pay your share of this promised reward. You have told us what you know about the party, and have said that you paid the five hundred piasters (500) so you would be spared from all these questions. Now that the formal questioning sessions are over, tell us what you were afraid to reveal? Was it something which you learned while attending the party?"

Shehadih answered, "Sir, I have told" you what happened at the party. At that time, I did not know if those present were the killers or not. Nobody informed me about that, and I do not know anything more. I am at your disposal. If you know of anything concerning me, I am ready to defend myself."

"A month passed after the report of the Consul. Then a message arrived to the Investigation Committee containing the following:

I have notified your Excellency earlier, that there are continuous movements advantageous to the interests of the detained Jews for intervention in the case of the slaying of the Priest and his servant. Today we learned that Khalil Saidnawi, the servant of Mohammal Talli, received a promise, from the Jews of Damascus, to give him amount of money in order to provide them with a report that would contradict all previous reports. Also they promised to pay sums of thousands of Riyals in exchange for being granted protection by the Consulate."

Date: Safar 20, 1256 H.
Signed: Consul of
France in Damascus

The French Consul dispatched a report, a follow up to his message, as follows:

"Introducing to your Excellency a Supplement to our message No. 28, dated 20th of Safar, 1256 H, regarding the money which was offered by the Jews to Khali Saidnawi, to obtain from him testimony that would weaken the investigation, which they claim, has been conducted. This plan was taken with the knowledge of the Austrian Consul to Damascus. I also submit to your Excellency what has taken place on this subject. A person who is under the protection of the French Consulate received a request from one of the represented Jews to secure a meeting with Shubli Ayub, who is one of your trusted public officials, for the purpose of dealing with an important problem. They informed us of the matter, and we gave them our permission in order to learn what the Jew, who came with a request of four things wanted.

First. Not to include their religious books in the investigation, because, they claim, this would be insulting and harmful to the community.

Second. To avoid mentioning the translations and the interpretations, which Abou Al-Afieh has obtained, from the Jewish book and seek their destruction.

Third. A request for the intercession of the French Consul with your Excellency for the release of Muallim Rafael from arrest, and to find the mean to reduce the verdict of those found guilty of the crime from the death penalty to a lighter and less harsh sentence.

Fourth. A sum of five hundred thousand piasters (500,000) has been allocated for the fulfillment of the above three terms. The amount of one hundred and fifty thousand piasters (150,000) would be paid immediately upon the return of the document and the rest, the amount of three hundred and fifty thousand piasters (350,000) would be paid upon the execution of the above mentioned terms. The sum will be handed to whomever the French Consul chooses.

On the second day, a bag containing silver currency arrived and I learned that the family of Meyer Farhi, in whose house Priest Thomas' servant was slain, sent it. The agent, who carried this as a trust, said that he did not know why the Farhi's Family sent the money; and that was all they said to him was, 'carry this bag, in it there are five thousand piasters (5,000), and deliver it to Chubly Ayub.' He brought the bag at once and delivered it to us.

It appears that this money is what they had promised him to help Meyer Farhi. We opened the bag and found in it four thousand three hundred and twenty-two piasters (4,322). It is being kept in our possession. Shubly Ayub has asked the Jews about the sum of money and who are those who obligated themselves to pay it. The answer to that was that some Rabbi's and Trustees of the Collection Box have agreed on this matter, and that they did not collect money from anyone: that it was from the Synagogue Chest. Therefore, there is no fear of this matter becoming known. This is the Jewish representative, who testified when he presented his petition, as stated earlier. And Khawaja Beaudin, the Austrian Consul's Assistant has received a proposition, from the Jewish Community through the representative himself, that he would be presented with three hundred bags for his personal efforts to reduce the penalty of the convicted persons accused in the slaying case of the Priest and his servant. The representative said, "this sum of money may be increased if he (Mr. Beaudin) thinks it is too little."

These two subjects show the strong movements by the Jews, which I feel compelled to bring to your Excellency's attention.

Date: Safar 20, 1256 H.
Signed: The French
Consul in Damascus

Due to this development, the Investigation Committee called both, Mohammad Talli and Khalil Saidnawi. Mohammad Talli came alone, and he was asked about the truth of the matter which was contained in the French Consul's report. He confessed to it. And because Khalil Saidnawi did not come, Mohammad Talli was dismissed on the condition that he come tomorrow morning with Khalil Saidnawi. The two came on Thursday morning, the 21st of Safar, 1256 H. and were questioned.

The Investigator asked Khalil Saidnawi first, and he confessed by saying, "I am renting a liquor store in the Jewish Quarter, near Eliahou Nahmed's house. Nahmed was in my shop on Monday, Safar 16, 1256 H. He said to me, 'What is this matter and what is the origin of it?' I said, 'What matter do you mean?' He replied, 'When you were detained in the prison, your wife said, 'If my husband is beaten I will disclose

the secret of the Priest.' I told him that my wife did not say such a thing and would not say it. She does not know anything about the case. Then he said to me, 'This case is finished. How would you feel about making some money out of it, plus getting protection? Would not that be better for you than moving to Alexandria and becoming a target for accusation and your face being beaten, even being killed? *{NOTE: It became publicly known that the Austrian Consul had let it be known in Damascus that the Khedevi of Egypt, Mohammad Ali Pasha had decided to study the case himself.}*

We wanted you to have the benefits from this case, since you are among us and in our neighborhood, and work with us as is known. Someone other than you would be subject to questioning and investigation. Also, a message has been received from the Pasha, Mohammad Ali, forbidding the beating of the Jews or harming them, stating that their case will be handled by the Austrian Consul in Alexandria, and that the French Consul is not permitted to deal with or to look into the matter. So, the investigation will be handled only by the Austrian Government officials. Talli, Mansour Tayyan, Moussa Sadaqah, Chubli Ayub, Francis Salina, and you will be called. Talli will be beaten until he admits what he has been told to say, which is that Talli asked you to throw the bones in the course of the Salty River. Then they will beat the Barber and he will say that Talli is the one who asked him to get rid of these notables, and the case will end in this manner.

If you do not believe me, I will swear by your Christ and our Lady Mary. And if you do not believe then, I will also swear to you by the Taghalin. And he swore to me, that no harm would befall me. A moment of silence passed, then he said, 'Tell me.' I replied, 'What should I say to you?' He said, 'I know that you are still hesitant and not sure. Come with me and I will show you a document that will guarantee you safety and protection, and a passport for you plus the money you need.' I got up and went with him to the Austrian Consul's residence. They brought a chair for me to sit on. I sat with the Consul, Picciotto, Eliahou Nahmed, and the Assistant to the Consul. Isaac Picciotto played the role of translator between me and the Assistant to the Consul, who started the conversation by saying to me, 'Tell me what you are going to say in order to deserve the Consulate's protection and the money?' I said to him, 'What do you want me to say to you? Do you want me to invent something for you?' He said, 'Why then did you come here?' I said to him, 'Mr. Eliahou Nahmed brought me here so that I would say what you want. Write it down for me and I will memorize it.' Then Isaac Picciotto said to me, 'Tell us and take four thousand (4,000) ghazis, (one hundred thousand piasters).' And he reached with his hand, for his wallet, into a pocket under his shirt, in order to show me that he was ready to give me the money. I said to him, 'This is a very large sum of money, and your wallet is not big enough to contain it.' Isaac Picciotto replied, 'You will receive the money either from me or somebody else, and we are ready to give you the money now.' I answered him, 'I am not in a hurry to receive the money. I want a period of three days to think.' They said to me, 'Are we women or children in your eyes? He who want to talk after three days can talk now. If you are still not sure or comfortable, His Excellency's Assistant is ready to give you his word of honor. You and your family can always stay with him. If you would like to go to Alexandria or Aleppo, he can send you

to work as an interpreter. *{NOTE: The Consul of Aleppo was an Austrian Jew named Elyan Picciotto.}*

'Also if you want you can go to Beyrouth (Beirut).' I answered him, 'Delay the matter until tomorrow because he who has no master has a partner.' He said to me, 'My son, the tail of happiness is a slick one. Do not catch the tail, but catch the head.' *{NOTE: A folk saying meaning take a chance quickly, catch it before it disappears.}* After that they tried me very hard, and I do not remember what was said to me. Finally, I said to them, 'Night talk is bad, give me time until tomorrow to consult with my partner.' *{NOTE: Saidnawi wanted to bring in another witness.}* They replied, 'We will give you a period of six days but you must answer us properly and clearly.' The following day was Tuesday. I met with Eliahou Nahmed in his house and he said to me, 'Who is your partner?' I said to him, 'Mohammad Talli.' He said, 'What Talli knows you know yourself.' I replied, 'True.' He said, 'But I say to you that we are afraid of him, and are not comfortable about him.' I answered, 'Don't you worry about him. I guarantee you that. You also sent for Talli and promised him a reward of four thousand Ghazis.' He replied, 'Yes, but we could not trust him.' I said to him, 'Don't worry, I guarantee you to convince him to say for you what you want, so do not be afraid of him.' I got up and left his house, and went immediately to Mohammad Talli's house and told him what we talked about in detail. At the same time Nahmed went to bring the money. When I finished talking, Mohammad Talli got up and went to the house of the French Consul and told about our conversation. The following day, which was Wednesday, the French Consul called me and questioned me. I admitted to him all what had happened. He told us, 'You go, and try your best to obtain from him (Nahmed) a written document of what is required of you, take what money they give you and come to me, and I will take you to the Pasha, the Governor General.'

We left the house of the French Consul. Mohammad Talli sent me to Eliahou Nahmed to inform him that 'I had been able to convince Talli, and that he, Eliahou Nehmad, should go with me to Mohammad Talli's house, and that he should bring the money, so that I could give Talli the money in your presence, and you take from him what you want.' I went to Eliahou Nahmed's house and told him of the plan. He replied, 'then you appoint or choose someone to represent you to receive the money. He will take the money to the Austrian Council's house to deposit it in a box there, and keep the keys with you until you give us the proof. After we have the proof you may come to the Consul's house and take your deposited money; and the Consul's protection you are promised. Do not be afraid, both of you, for we will refuse the matter all together if you are successful in your task. At this point the Austrian Consul will obtain soldiers from the Pasha and they will be sent to the place you reveal as the place where the remains of the Priest are hidden. No one will mention your names.'

I replied to him, 'I know of no agent or box. My pocket is the place where I deposit my money. If you want us to work with you, give us the money, either at my house or at Talli's house. After that you take whatever papers you need.'

The money was kept with Nahmed on the condition that I will return to his house, after sunset, and bring Talli with me. However, I did not

find Talli in his house, and when I returned to Nahmed's house he met me with anxiety saying to me, 'I request of you by your yours, and your family's honor to tell me the truth. You have now become a member of my family, we shared the meal of bread and salt together. Do you know that the Governor, the Pasha, has called Mohammad Talli to meet with him?' I answered him, 'I did not know that this had happened. The reason for this could be related to tax matters. Anyway, he will be returning to his house. I will go to him and inquire of him what has happened, and bring him to you.' I went to Mohammad Talli's house at Isha time. He was there. I met with him, and said to him, 'the people are very restless because you went to the Pasha. They want you to come to them.' He replied by saying, 'See people in the morning, and do not see them at. night. If it is necessary for me to comply with their wishes to see me tonight, they are welcome to come to my house. Let them bring the money with them, so we may give them the desired report.'

I went back to Eliahou Nahmed's house, carrying this message of Mohammad Talli, with what he wanted me to say. Nahmed sent me back, and for the second time he requested that I bring Talli with me to his house. When I returned, I found that Talli had left his house and had gone to Hanna Taweel's house. I followed him there, and told him, 'The people want you in their house.' While we were there, discussing this, there was a knock on the door, and George Hamami entered by saying, 'There are two Jews in Talli's house, and they want him. We left Taweel's house for Talli's house. We found Eliahou Nahmed there with his servant. The other Jew who was with Nahmed was a European, by the name of Isaac Zalta. He and two or three others left in the direction of the Silver Gate. We all went inside Talli's house and he began to talk with him regarding this matter."

The above information was the testimony of Khalil Saidnawi to the Investigation Committee. The Committee next called Talli in requesting that he read the contents of the testimony of Saidnawi. When he finished reading the testimony he agreed that the contents of the testimony were accurate as to what had occurred.

He said, "All of the contents of this report are accurate. Yesterday, His Excellency, the Governor General, inquired of me regarding this matter. I informed him, verbally, as to what had happened. Then I told him that I had been promised that I would get the money tonight. I have come today in order to present to you what has occurred. Eliahou Nahmd came to my house. He was seen entering my house by George Hamami, Mohammad Hariss, and the son of Baqsimawi Mohammad. And when Ibu Zalta saw me coming from Taweel's house he left in the direction of the Silver Gate. We then entered the house. Afterwards, after we sat down and Eliahou Nahmed said to me, "We have talked to you of the matter before. But neither of us had trust in the other until Khalil came as an intermediary which brought us together. There is nothing left between us except what God has forbidden. I entered your house motivated by the love between us, in order for you to benefit from this case, which is no longer a problem. Have no fears because His Excellency, the Austrian Consul, has guaranteed your complete protection. If you take refuge in his house nothing will get to you, not even rain from the sky. We have learned that they have promised you the sum of fifty thousands, and have guaranteed your protection. Have they given you anything, or has it all been falsely promised? They have

cheated you, deserted you, and did not give you anything. But we will give cash money, and we ask of you nothing until you get the protection which we spoke about. Also, Isaac Picciotto sends his greetings to you, hoping that you will forget all traces of the argument between the two of you. He praises your stand toward him, because you have not said anything to harm him. After he learned that you did not get anything he wants you to benefit from this case. If you do not believe me, or trust me, let us go. I will accompany you to the Assistant of the Austrian Consul, who will swear to you on his honor, that also Picciotto will promise you faithful commitment; to be true to you and give you whatever is due."

Then I replied to him that I wanted to help them, and that he was being truthful in his words and deeds; "that we too would be truthful to you if you will show us the way you are going. Thus I made a promise with Khalil. I will not go to the Assistant of the Consul. Just give me a copy of what you want, so that I can write for you, in my own handwriting, and stamp it with my seal." He answered me, "We have no copy or a written format to dictate. What we want from you is that you do it? I said, "By God, the only thing I know is what has become clear to all people as the shining sun. The rope of lie is short. If I started with a made up story, and it is shown to be false, the bad repercussion will be reflected on you and me, because the investigation and examination will sort out the truth from the falsehood. And as I understand, you have submitted complaints, that you have sufficient proofs about the disposal of the Priest Thomas, and that you have what is needed to refute the accusations against you. If you have a method that would benefit me and you, or an acceptable logical explanation, which one can depend on, give me some direction or guide line which I can keep and follow." He said to me, "What we want from you is to tell the truth, because if we had any of the truth we would not have needed you." I replied, "If I had the true facts of the crime I would have submitted them 'to you freely, in order to have benefited from it." Khalil interrupted by saying "He did not speak with me about that, but he did say to me, "Give me the money, and I will tell you where his remains are, supporting this with reliable proofs." He said to me, "So, you really do not trust me, I want to take you to the Consul." I said, "I do not go, and if you do not have trust in me, then let me go to sleep."

I repeated my saying that "I can not lie about anything. If Khalil told you something which is not true, Khalil is here in front of you." Khalil responded, "You did not say that. I say today, and I will say tomorrow, bring the money and I will tell where the remains of the Priest Thomas are. I am ready to testify to this in the presence of the Governor General, the Pasha, as I have promised to convince Mohammad Talli. If he is convinced, that will be good. If he is not, then I can only say to you, give me the money." With this, Eliahous Nahmed left. Afterwards I asked Khalil, "How can you say that you know the place of the Priest's remains, and try to convince me of that?" He replied, "True, you also know where the Priest's bones were, and from where we salvaged them, and when they went with us. All I wanted was to get the money from them first, then confess to what is already known." So, I decided to come and give my testimony.

After this, the Investigation Committee met to review the case. The number being accused in this case included sixteen persons. Among them were: two, Joseph Aaron and Joseph Lifyado, who died during the investigation. Four others, Moussa Abou Al-Afieh, Aslan Farhi, Soliman Saloom (the Barber), and Murad Al-Fattal, were acquitted and pardoned because of their cooperation in providing valuable information which helped to reveal the others involved in the case.

Of the remaining ten, the Governor General, Sharif Pasha, issued his judgment, based on the verdict reached by the Investigation Committee, that they be executed. The ten convicted persons were: David Harari, Aaron Harari, Isaac Harari, Meyer Farhi, Rabbi Moussa Bokhoor Yehuda (Salaniki), Murad Farhi, Aaron Islambouli, Isaac Picciotto, Jacob Abou Al-Afieh, and Joseph Menachem Farhi.

The execution of the ten men was to take place after the Governor General's approval and public announcement. However, the French Consul, Mr. Comte De Ratti-Menton, succeeded in obtaining an order to refer the judgment to Ibrahim Pasha, the Commander General of the Egyptian Armies for his approval. This delay was sufficient time for saving the lives of those who had been condemned to die. Because during this time, two prominent Jewish lawyers, sent by European Jews to save these members of the Jewish community arrived in Alexandria, requesting from Mohammad Ali Pasha that he issue an order for a new investigation. Khedavi Mohammad Ali Pasha realized that this would create a fiery hatred between Christians and Jews. Yet he promised them that he would issue his order to pardon the convicted Jews.

The lawyers pointed out to him, that the word "pardon" meant an acknowledgement of the "crime". They requested him to release them, and to permit the return of those who had fled. He submitted to their request.

{NOTE: Political and financial factors played a significant role in convincing Mohammad Ali Pasha to forgive these criminals. He was in dire need of money, and the friendship of European Governments, who were pursuing the English policy in order to remove the Syrian region from his rulership. He also saw sixty thousand bags of gold (300,000 gold liras) as being more valuable to the government than the execution of the ten Jews. Thus, he issued his order for their pardon and their release. Most of these men and their families moved to Egypt, where they remained, fleeing from the anger of the Christians and Muslims in Damascus. In Egypt, some became very rich and successful in the region economic and financial life, like the Hararis, Lifyado, and Abou Al-Afieh.}

As soon as Sharif Pasha received the orders from the Khedavi, he released the convicted, on the 15th of September, 1840, when the curtain was drawn on this crime.

READINGS

1. Abou Al-Afieh's Report after his Conversion to Islam.

2. A Document in Dr. Michael Mashaqah's Papers.

3. Survey of the Wealth of the Jews who took part in the slaying of Father Thomas and his servant.

4. The Jews Attempt to Declare their Innocence.

5. Chubli Ayub's Response to the Jews.

6. The Jews Permit the Killing of Christians.

1 - Abou Al-Afieh's Report after his Conversion to Islam

I herewith submit to your Honorable Court, in accordance with the Governor's Order, as to what I know regarding the Priest Thomas' slaying, which caused me to become a Muslim. Being a believer in God, the Most High, and in our Prophet Mohammad, Peace be upon Him, I herewith give a written confession, which is rightfully true.

The Chief Rabbi, Jacob Intabi, spoke with us before the incident, which was between ten to fifteen days prior to the event. He told us that he needed human blood in order to comply with the teachings of our religion. He advised us that David Harari and his brothers were to commit this act of duty in one of their houses, and that he had obtained their solemn oath of commitment to fulfill what was required under all circumstances. I was obligated to be present, in order to take the blood to him. I said I cannot stand the sight of blood. He replied that, "You may stand outside, but you must come with Moussa and Joseph Lifyado." We agreed to his request in the belief that the Harari Family would refuse to commit this act in their house. When Wednesday, March 1st, arrived (according to the Hebrew Calendar), we left the house on our way to the Synagogue for prayer. We saw David Harari standing nearby. He said to me, "I need you; come with me to the house." I responded, "What do you want? Allow me [to] pray, then I will come to you." He then said, "Let us go now and I will tell you." I walked with him. He continued talking to me until he finally told me that the Priest was in his house, and that he was to be slain after dark.

I said to him, "Did the Rabbi request this or does he only want blood?" He replied, "This is what is to take place, do not be afraid, we will do the slaying." When we entered the house, we saw them sitting in a newly furnished room. The Priest, Thomas was bound. Later on, between sunset and Isha time, we moved to the second room, a deserted and unfurnished room. David walked toward him and slew him. He was assisted

by his brothers Aaron and Isaac Harari. Together they drained his blood in the basin. When the blood had completely drained from the body, they put the blood in a white glass bottle, then they instructed me to take it to Rabbi Jacob immediately. I took the bottle and went to Rabbi Jacob's house. I found him waiting for me in the garden, outside the house. When he saw me he entered the library right away, and we followed after him. I said to him, "It is very late, please take what you have requested." He took the bottle and put it behind the desk, and we returned, each of us to his own house. In regard to the matter of the clothes, and the body of the Priest, we left them in the house. They had not done anything with them yet. I had told the Harari brothers, earlier, that this will be followed up by very careful investigation, and there will be many headaches too!, that it was mandatory that they should avoid this act. They replied, "There is to be no mention of this. No one is to know about it. There is to be no trace of it. We have decided to burn his clothes until all traces of them are lost. As for the body, we will cut it to pieces and throw it in the river tunnels. There will be no traces left of it either. I have a large hiding place under the stairway, where we can place it until we get rid of it piece by piece. Do not be afraid. And please do not bring fear to our hearts." As to the question of the Priest's servant, Ibrahim Amarah, God knows that I knew absolutely nothing at all about his slaying until just before noon on Thursday. I learned about it from David, Isaac and Joseph Harari as they were talking in front of a small wine store, at that time. Isaac was speaking with David about what had been taking place, and they were whispering to each other. After that, each of us left for his business. We have no close relation with the 'grandees,' and those of the Harari house are 'grandees.' Thus we don't have much contact with them. They have parties, send invitations, and organize singing celebrations, which we do not attend, nor are we invited. As to the question of the blood, and the Jews need for it to make unleavened bread for the evening of their feast, it is exactly as we have stated earlier. They have requested this often, and those who were involved were arrested and delivered to the court. The Jews have a book called 'Sirf Hodovot.' It contains many incidents in which court cases have been brought against the Jews, and they always claim that these cases are nothing but lies and accusations. In their book they present the details of the cases against the Jews over the matter of the blood. This is all that I know about the Priest's case. Now, I am your servant, who is taking refuge in God, the Most High, and His Prophet-Messenger, our Prophet Mohammad, who has been a guide for us to the truth in the Muslim Religion. I plead for your Excellency's kindness and forgiveness. The Command is for He who has the Command.

Signed

Muhammad Al-Muslimani

<u>The Patriarchate Magazine</u>, VII, Vol. 1, January 15, 1933, pp. 113-115, states that Moussa Abou Al-Afieh threw his headdress at the feet of the Minister and said, "Because the Jewish Religion is like this, I renounce it and will accept Islam and become a Muslim." He was received with respect and was given a white turban.

2 - A Document in Dr. Michael Mashaqah's Papers

{*NOTE: These documents were found in Dr. Michael Mashaqah's Papers, in his own hand-writing, and were copied by his son Dr. Ibrahim Mashaqah in Damascus*.}

I was among those invited to perform the examination of Father Thomas' remains, in the interest of the French Consul, and the Austrian Consul Mr. Merlato. When the examination of the bones was performed, animal bones were found among the human bones. I separated what was judged to be of human type and found a piece of an upper jaw with a lock of hair from the beard. After the completion of this examination, another examination was conducted to determine the type of clothes found; a piece of Father Thomas' black cap was found. Mr. Merlato wrote his witnessed statement, that he was sure that this was of the Priest's cap. Then a wool piece from the Priest's robe was found. When I took a look at it I was certain that this too was of the Priest's robe. Also, I found another piece of the same material, from the shoulder part, with a part of conical shape used by the priests as a head cover, to protect him from cold weather. This made me even more certain of the reason that I remembered, since months before the disappearance of Father Thomas I had stopped at a wool clothing store and bought what my family and myself needed for winter. The salesman showed me a thick piece of wool, as thick as felt, saying that it came with the wool material he had received lately. Because he did not want to buy it, he thought of returning it. But he indicated to me that he would reduce the price if I wanted it. I thought it was good for traveling in cold and snowy weather conditions, so I bought a piece, large enough to make trousers and a jacket for me. During this time, Priest Thomas came by, he asked me what I was doing, and I told him. Then he said, "This material suits me well for the winter season." He took the rest of the material and asked if there was more of it. The salesman said no. And since there was nothing like this in Damascus, he made a winter robe from it. Therefore, the two pieces of wool which were found with the bones should have been of the material which we both bought and which could be found nowhere else in Damascus.

Among the papers the following document was also found:

The Jews remained under detention for months until Montefiore, the famous Israeli, came from England to Alexandria. He obtained a Proclamation Order from Muhammad Ali Pasha to Sharif Pasha, to pardon the convicted Jews, and to declare them not guilty. It [is] said that the cost was sixty thousand bags of gold paid to Muhammad Ali Pasha, an equivalent to 300,000 golden liras, in addition to three thousand bags for his administration. We could not discover the truth of the matter. The convicted murderers of the Priest and his servant were set free.

3 - Survey of the Wealth of the Jews who took part in the slaying of Father Thomas and his servant

Name	Number of bags
Murad Farhi	5,000
David Farhi	500
Isaac Harari	500
Aaron Harari	5,000
Joseph Harari	300
Joseph Lifyado	100
Moussa Abou Al-Afieh	50
Moussa Salayankhi	500
Aslan Farhi	50
Joseph Farhi	2,000
Yehya Meyer Farhi	300
Jacob Abou Al-Afieh	100
Aaron Islambouli	2,000
Jacob Intabi (The Rabbi has no wealth of his own. He lives on the contributions of his community.)	

One bag equals five gold liras, or five hundred Turkish piasters; or 125 gold francs. This shows that these men were among the wealthiest in Damascus at that time.

4 - The Jews Attempt to Declare their Innocence

A Report submitted by Isaac Barouch and Leon Seedi, in their own names and in the name of some members of the Jewish community in Izmir, on April 17, 1840. This was published in Izmir Gazette; it contains the following:

We were very surprised upon reading the report of our Chief Rabbi, our spiritual leader, which was published in your magazine on March 28, 1840, [that] he decided, by his own diligence, that "our religion is based on the Torah." Mistakes of this kind are the cause of our misery. What they themselves (our spiritual leaders) decided is the reason of our oppression. Because they prevent us from opening our eyes to the truth, and seeing the light. We believe that it is our duty to inform the world about the practice of our religion, which they force us to do unwillingly. This is true, in the example of what our Rabbi just did. All that we want from every person, who knows the Torah is to appreciate the intention of our Rabbi Benhas Skourah, who published his above mentioned report. In fact, with the acknowledgement that the Jewish Religion is based on the Torah, as stated by our Chief Rabbi, but he did not show or point [out] to us the added corrections and commentaries in the Torah that provide adequate support for the following acts:

"First. Where is the proof which makes it unlawful to eat beef, goat, and sheep meat unless slain by the hand of a Rabbi?"

"Second. From what source does the following derive, the forbidding of the wine if it is made or touched by a person other than a Jew?"

"Third. In what chapter or book of our Law is this contained, which prevents an Israeli from walking on Saturday while carrying a key, a watch, two handkerchiefs, a needle, or anything that is not necessary to have?"

"Fourth. In what chapter of the Torah is there a specific reference relating to the protection of the most able and wealthiest of the any profession from the losses of the community, or of making the poor pay for them, providing for the security and freedom of the Talmudic reciters, as well as for many other things of this type which we do not have enough time to explain. And if there was not a trace of reason for such a Commandment in the Mosaic Law, how then could our respected Chief Rabbi confirm that all the Commandments of the Mosaic Law are based on the Torah? Is it not better for him to admit that the Diligence Association publishes lies and deception of the rich? Do you want to know what would happen to us, the poorer of the Jews, if we refused these myths of our Rabbis? If we have little money, they steal it; if we do not have money, they excommunicate us or deliver us to the rulers to be tortured like criminals. Let us take our case to the Court. We know that they have organized committees of witnesses to testify against us; that the Rabbinic Law permits acts of deception, cheating, and persecution until death for any person who objects to the acts of the Rabbis, which they call the "Jewish Religion." We remember an incident of these religious acts, which were designed by our master Rabbi Benhas. One day, it was Saturday, it happened that he met a Jew who forgot his shop key in his pocket. He tortured him until he opened his money bag and he stole what he had. There are a great many miserable people who have been subjected to similar punishment for this "grave sin." We asked those righteous ones, "Are these real religious acts?" "Is this a Divine Law?" Are these Rabbis too ignorant to see that these actions are contrary to the policies of our masters, and contrary to the honorable way of our country? How long will Rabbis be able to continue violating our rights against the will of our master, who wants equality for his subjects without discrimination, as to status or difference of religion. We ask the Royal Court to put an end to this situation. They are myths prescribed by our Rabbis, who make lawful the killing of human beings.

5 - Chubli Ayub's Response to the Jews

{*NOTE: Chubli Ayub, Hadaya Al-Massarrah, Historical Documents of the Royal Patriarchate, St. Paul Printing Press, 1937, pp. 73-84. This also covers the next section*.}

Some Jews in Izmir came forward and presented a report to be published and distributed throughout the world. Probably, this action has two sides, either an alarming truth, formulated by them to tell what they have learned about their Rabbinic Law, or it may be based on deception and cheating, as they themselves have testified against their Rabbinic Law. It is possible that the frank tone of this report was the result

of the ignorance of those who wrote the report in Izmir, about the truth. This truth is that the secrets of their religion are not contained in the books, but are kept with the Rabbis and the notables of their religion, inherited by them through tradition. This is one side. On the other side, it is quite possible that the report is based on deception and cheating. Because, in spite of what they have introduced of the Commandments, these are of secondary importance compared to the others. This criticism of their Rabbis is uglier than what has been revealed of the Jewish Religion in Syria. It is possible that the Jews in Izmir did what was planned by their Rabbis to deceive and misguide world opinion, and to indicate that their report in the magazine is a true report. Due to what it contained of criticism of their Rabbis, so the people may believe it. Their aim from this is to record the case of the murder, which has revealed their secret, and their inclusion in the book (Sid Hedrout), which includes all their characteristics, and to say that these characteristics are accusations. But the clear testimony of Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh has unveiled them.

We asked Isaac Barouch and his friends, who presented this report in Izmir to be published and circulated throughout the world, this question: "If the Torah does not contain any of these ugly commandments, and if this is for certain, did you look into all Rabbinic Laws and their preserved documents?" We are now certain that it is impossible to unveil these laws to the public. No one can reach this knowledge except those who have achieved the highest degree from the Rabbis of this law. If you have achieved this level, it is impossible to believe what you presented of criticism against them. Because if you have reached the Rabbinic status, you are bound to behave as they do, otherwise you will be declared to be a deserter of your religion. Then they would have issued a legitimate call to kill you in any way, as it has been confirmed regarding those who cause harm to a Jew or to the Jewish Religion. But because you are a 'poor Jew', as you have indicated, it may be due to your ignorance of the secret, as to the lawful killing of human beings, because it was disclosed from your Rabbinic law that: "The non-Jewish nations are not humans in the same way the Jews are. But they belong to the animal type, and must be treated as such." We give you proof of the factual existence of this secret with your Rabbis and your religious notables in what now has become clear. Because it is a solid belief, it cannot be negated by lies and deception, like the slaying of the Priest Thomas and his servant in Damascus. [If it is] your statement that the Torah does not permit such acts, acts not appropriate as religious acts, then by what law did you kill John and Zakariah before? It is a known fact that they were Prophets. Explain this to us. Otherwise, you are all deceivers, and I conclude this by saying "peace".

6 - The Jews Permit the Killing of Christians

I had hoped to review the Report of Rabbi Benhas Seeklorah, The Grand Rabbi of the Jews, in order to be able to think and respond to the contents, within the scope of my limited knowledge of the Jewish

Religion and their basic beliefs. Now that I have been able to take a look at the report, I find myself obligated to respond, especially since no one else has took the initiative to do so. It is the duty of every informed person because of the horrors contained in the Jewish Religion to respond in order for people to know especially the evils of their beliefs so that they will no longer be hidden from those who have the intellect to understand, and those who were not provided the means [by] which [to] search for these beliefs.

I was in Damascus during the incident of the slaying of the Priest and his servant. Through the investigation into the causes of the crime, I learned what will be stated later on, as to their false beliefs. I wonder about the community itself, and those who grew up studying these deceptions and secrets as to whether they were among those who have read the Talmud. Their report which was mentioned earlier, which contained these unworthy and ridiculous views, is subject to their own evils, and will ultimately concive [*sic; deceive?*] and encircle its own makers. They have displayed to the whole world some of their less harmful deception while leaving the great horrors hidden. How plentiful are the horrors committed against other nations, which are part of the Talmud? If they are not among those who have read the Talmud, and do not know its source, they are obliged to inform us as to the manner in which they have responded to their Rabbi in regard to these utterance, which they presented to him in the form of a question. How could they state, at the end of their report, that they have not read, and that they have never heard of their religion permitting the killing of human beings? In addition to that, if they read the Talmud, the proofs which we are going to state, would reveal their aim as conniving and deception as mentioned in the report. However, if they were not informed of it, why? According to the Jews, people of the earth are people. As stated by Ruby Aliazar in Sameem's book of the Talmud, which states of them "people of the earth" regarding their sacrifice at Yum Kipper, the day of forgiveness. It is the first of the New Year when the Jews fast for twenty-four hours, even if it occurs on a Saturday. He was asked by his students, "You said their sacrifice, why did you not say their slaying?" He said, "The slaying requires a blessing, but the sacrifice does not need a blessing." Later on other Rabbis adopted his version and completed their saying, "It is permissible to split open the people of the earth, in the same way you split open the fish." If this is their concept, it is permissible to execute those who do not read the Talmud, to allow them to be sacrificed and split them open. It [is] imperative upon those who submitted the report to ask of their Rabbi, Benhas Seeklorah, where this law came from. And if this is to be applied to these who do not read the Talmud, I wonder what law they have reserved for the rest of the nations of the world?

Rabbi Benhas Seeklorah is the one who is responsible for a reply to those who have the report in order to convince them. I am not obligated to reply to them, even though what is about to occur shortly will explain it. But I did find it imperative for me to reply to some of what was in their report. For instance, "If they have a small amount of money, their Rabbi will steal it from them, and if they had none they would be excommunicated or delivered to the rulers to be tortured like the criminals." This statement has no foundation at all, as it is stated in their religious teaching, nor according to those who prepared the report. But the basic truth of their religious teaching does state

that, "If a person collaborated with the government against another Jew, or other than a Jew, and causes physical harm to the Jew, then it is lawful to kill the collaborator," such a person is regarded by them as an enemy, as mentioned in the Talmud, and the interpretations of the saying. One of these interpretations, according to Rabbi Soliman Rashi, who is recognized by the Jews for his sayings and interpretations in the book "Kamarat Abbourah Zadah," on page 26. Also Hassan Mishbat's book, "Shalha and A'roukh," page number 380 of the "Awani" is interpreted as follows, "I mean the one who causes his Jewish friend to pay money to someone other than a Jew, or identified him to the governor, which would expose him, causing him to pay money for a beating or even a murder. Even if his Jewish friend had committed my sins, or was hated by him, or had caused him many injustices, in spite of all that, if he collaborated, the collaborator must be killed, and he would have no chance of entering heaven in the next life. And if he did not cooperate except within the sphere of the use of words against his Jewish brother, in order to obtain some personal gains, or to win money, regardless of how that came about, then this person has justified his own murder. It is to be enjoined on any person who hears his voice to attempt to kill him. The person who is the first to succeed in the act will have great rewards. If he needs money in order to kill him, the Jewish community of that town are obligated to pay the expenses, each according to his share.

It is clear, that their contention that their Rabbis steal their money and hand them over to the rulers to be tortured like criminals, are false and baseless claims. This has been stated in their books in addition to what they know. However, we have no knowledge of it ourselves. This proves a single fact, which is to say, "How easy it is for them to kill a human being."

Second. They have stated in their above mentioned report that hundreds of witnesses are ready to testify that the Rabbinic Laws justify deception, cheating, discrimination, and even death to every human being who opposes the Rabbinic Laws and their actions, which they call the Jewish Religion, according to their sayings, "Do not conclude from this that it justifies the killing of human beings, because this accusation is void;" yet now they say that there is no such thing, and that they never heard of it!

The comparison of these two statements in a clear report shows the facts which they themselves are trying to refute. According to their religion, they believe that the human race is only the People of Israel, and all others, from all nations, are merely animals. In the book "Aboura Wudah", page 35 we find stated that the Torah does not forbid the Jews from marrying women from other nations. However, it forbids the Jewish women from marrying men from other nations. It appears that these learned men have little respect for Jewish women. Do they think that they (the men) are the only ones capable of knowing the difference between the animal nations and the human Jews? This is one point. The other is stated in the book of "Aroubeen" that it is not permissible for a Jew to reside in a house with a person from other nations, and that the Jew must strive to evict such a person. It says that the homes of the other nations are like animal stables, and that they are not homes at all.

Third. It states in the book "Barakhout," the first part of the Talmud, on page 53, in reference to what happened to one of their learned men in Egypt, who struck a Jew because he met with an Egyptian woman. The Jew went to the governor complaining, "There are learned Jews who legislate law contrary to the laws of the government." The governor summoned the learned man and asked him the reason for beating the man. He answered that he has beaten him because he met with a female donkey. The governor asked him to produce witnesses. And Behold! The Khodr, peace be upon him, appeared and testified against the man. Then the governor asked him, "Why did you not kill him?" He replied, "When we left our country, we left with no permission to kill." On leaving the governor's office, the Jew said to the learned man, "You lied to me, may God take you for your lie." The learned man responded, "You cursed one! This is not their name. To us, their names are donkeys, and their flesh is the flesh of a donkey." The Jews wanted to go back to the governor to complain against the learned man. Then the learned man raised his stick and struck and killed him.

Fourth. It is stated in Article six of the book "Biamout," that the Torah states that whoever sits by a grave will be fouled by impurity and become unclean. This is true for the graves of the Jews because their name is Adam, and that the rest of the nations are not of Adam, therefore, the impurity does not befall on whoever touches their graves.

Fifth. It also states on page 25 of the book "Rafout," that a learned man states that if a person of another nation is naked, it is not lawful for a Jew to pray in front of him. This [is] because it [is] permissible to liken their flesh to the flesh of [the] donkey. Because this is indecent exposure, as stated in the Torah in regard to Noah's sons when they saw their father's indecent exposure. These proofs clarify what has been stated by those who made the report. Because in their eyes only the Jews are from the human race, since the people of other nations are like animals, and are not a part of the human race. It is possible for me after this to explain the proofs, which I have learned regarding the lawful killing of people from other nations, the non-Jews. Whoever reads the Talmud will discern a wide and spacious field of treasury and horror, which the Jews use in the name of their religion.

Article seven, page 58 of the book "Sinhareen," states, "Every idol worshipper must be killed if he strikes anyone from the people of Israel." This is based on the statement, "When the Prophet Moses saw an Egyptian quarrelling with an Israelite he struck the Egyptian and killed him."

This is one. The second is, "If an idol worshipper wanted to rest on Saturday, he must be killed, because God says, "They are not to rest night or day." If an idol worshipper reads the Torah, he must be killed, because the Torah is only for the People of Israel. The third is stated in Article 158 of the book "Tourboudah dasah," that "It is not permissible for a good Jewish doctor to treat anyone from the other nations, even for paid services. But if the Jewish doctor is not good in the medical practice, he must learn by treating only people of other nations. It is forbidden for him to treat any Jew as long as he remained unskilled."

Also, it states likewise on page 26 of the book "Abour Zadah".

The Fourth. It is stated in Rabbi Soliman Rashi's book, on interpreting the Torah, "When the People of Israel decided to leave Egypt, Moses asked his God to bring cold weather over Egypt in order to destroy all the animals. God responded to his request. Then the People of Israel asked the permission of the Pharaoh to leave Egypt, and he granted them his permission. Afterwards he was sorry, and he readied his horses, took his people, and all the horsemen of Egypt, and tried to follow them to bring them back." The interpreter wonders by asking, "From where did the Pharaoh bring these horses, since the cold weather had already killed all the animals of Egypt?" He replied to himself, "These horses belong to the Egyptians who fear God, who heard the words of Moses. They hid their horses until the cold waves passed by, and their horses were not affected." As for Pharaoh and his men, we saw how they entered the sea, and God drowned them and their horses, killing all of them. According to what Rabbi Shamoun has said, "The one who is good, virtuous of other nations you kill, and the nice one from the snakes, you crush his head."

What is stated above is only some of the multitudes of their teachings. But this is enough to move towards some stated information regarding the murder investigation of the Priest Thomas and his servant, and what accompanied the investigation of the argument with Rabbi Jacob Intabi, the Chief Rabbi of the Jewish Community in Syria, with Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh, and Khawaja Meyer Farhi.

The Investigator began by saying, "The murder of the Priest and his servant was not a personal act of yourself, but one in accordance with the religion. You executed your act, not required by the commandment of your religion. This is in line with what Mohammad Afandi Al-Muslimani (previously Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh) translated from your books, when he explained that, "the permission to kill, according to the Talmud, is applicable to the idol worshippers and nations of the past, and not of those who are Muslims or Christians." And so it was said to him that the nations of the past were subject to killing because they were idol worshippers. I wonder if you now believe in what our Master Jesus brought forth and of the Most Noble Bible, and of what our Master Mohammad and the Most Noble Quran brought forth. If you believe in that and acknowledge it, then the words of the Talmud would be accurate about those nations of the ancient past. But if you do not believe these Prophets, and their Books, this means that you regard them the same as the rest of the nations. What is your opinion? Rabbi Moussa answered, "What is stated in the Talmud applies to the idol worshippers. As far as the Christians and Muslims, they are not idol worshippers, because they renounced idol worship."

The Investigator asked, "We suppose that all Christians deserted idol worship, in spite of the fact, that some of them were Jews and some were idol worshippers. You must make clear to us, which of your books forbids their killing, because they deserted idol worship and became Christians or Muslims?"

Meyer Farhi responded, "I do not have an answer." Rabbi Moussa said, "I do not have an answer." The Investigator then said, "If you do not have

an answer, this means that you permit the killing of all, without separating the Christians and the Muslims from the idol worshippers."

Meyer said, "This question is for the Chief Rabbi of Religion." Thus, Rabbi Jacob, the Chief Rabbi was called, and was asked about that, and they read to him what was lawful. He replied, "I cannot answer now. I need to consult the books and the sources." They said to him, "Request the books which you need, and we will bring them to you." He said, "I do not remember any particular book now. When I return to my house, I will search and give the needed answer." Then Rabbi Moussa Abou Al-Afieh asked, "if this was applicable to the idol worshippers, why do whom [sic] you destroy for [sic] the wine of a Jew if it has been touched by a Christian or a Muslim[?]. Why is it forbidden for a Jew to eat bread or any food from the house of a Christian or a Muslim? The Talmud forbade the[m] regarding idol worshippers. It is clearly shown what the Talmud has forbidden regarding idol worshippers. This is still applicable to all nations also."

Rabbi Jacob replied, "If we know that a Christian or a Muslim really and truthfully knew God as we know Him, to eat or drink with him would be lawful. However, our knowledge of the nations, which are mixed together, makes it necessary for us to forbid eating and drinking with them." Then Rabbi Jacob was addressed as follows, "Look at the Muslims and the Christians living all over Syria, they believe in God and know Him as you do. Is it lawful to eat and drink with them in accordance with the requirements of your religion?"

Rabbi Jacob answered, "There are many of them. Also among them are Druzes, Nussiriyeh, and Tayamnih. Therefore, we cannot separate those who believe in God from those who do not."

Then they addressed him accordingly, "In Syria there are many learned men, well known Muslim sheiks, who are true believers of Islam and who hold true belief of God. They are very far apart in their beliefs from the Druzes, Nussiriyeh, or Tayamnih; would you eat and drink with them?" Rabbi Jacob answered, "If we ate with some of them, and refused to eat with others, this would cause hate and animosity between us. For this reason we are forbidden to eat with all of them." Then it was said to him, "Therefore, by this view you are seeking justice (for all) through your enmity towards all and not towards some."

These sayings require much observation and serious thought from us. The answers of this Rabbi indicate that they want to convert all to Judaism. We must all become like them, in order to lawfully participate in all their affairs. Also what he has said is that there are among the other nations Druzes, Nussiriyeh, and Tayamnih which would indicate that the Jewish law would permit the lawful killing of those in the same way that is lawful for idol worshippers. Because they state that what has been mentioned in the Talmud is applicable to the idol worshippers and to the followers of ancient religions and beliefs. It has become clear during the trial of Father Thomas and his servant how they (the Jews) feel regarding these crimes. They would not have denied their justification for the killing of all Christians or Muslims.

DOCUMENTS

[Editor's Note: The French text has not been exhaustively proofread]

The ———— House for Study, Translation and Publishing obtained the following documents concerning the murder of Father Thomas. These were the official Messages between the French consul in Damascus, and the French consul General in Alexandria, and the French Government in Paris, during the time of the crime, its ambiguity and of the circumstances.

We have affixed to each document, its number, date, and source as it is listed in the preserved records of the French Foreign Ministry.

Damas, le 21 décembre 1839

Ratti-Menton au ministre, le maréchal duc de Dalmatie,
Président du Conseil, ministre d'État des Affaires Etrangères

Objet: Le Père Thomas, religieux franciscain et se demande de pension pour ses vieux jours.

Le Père Thomas, aujourd'hui presque septuagénaire, s'est rendu en Syrie, il y a presque 30 ans, d'après la promesse que lui fit le cardinal Fesch que le gouvernement impérial pourvoirait à son sort. Il est certain que cette promesse n'obtint jamais sa réalisation et que le religieux dont il s'agit s'est u réduit aux ressources les plus exigus.

D'après les renseignements pris par moi auprès de Mr Beaudin et qui concordent avec ceux de nos pères lazaristes, le Père Thomas a été toujours un homme paisible, remplissant sans fanatisme les devoirs sacerdotaux et s'était concilié ici l'estime et l'affection des chrétiens et des musulmans.

Mais un fait qui, selon moi, doit lui mériter la bienveillance du gouvernement du Roi et de tous les amis de l'humanité, c'est l'introduction de la vaccine que lui doit les populations de Damas et qu'il a propagé avec un zèle louable.

Il fonde d'autant plus d'espoir pour sa demande d'une pension que son grand âge ne lui permettra pas d'en jouir longtemps. Je dois ajouter qu'il est presque aveugle et que l'existence à Damas d'une cure (paroissiale) desservie par les moines de Terre sainte le prive des émoluments qu'il aurait eus comme chapelain de la nation.

Je suis...

Source: Archives Affaires Etrangères

Direction commerciale et du contentieux Consulat de Damas, Vol. 1 (1839-1844), rapport n.12, fol.24-25.

Damascus, December 21, 1839

From: Ratti-Menton

To: The Minister, the Marshal Duke of Dalmatie, President of the Council of Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The Subject: Father Thomas, the French religious man, who is requesting a retirement salary in his old age.

Father Thomas is seventy years old today. He came to Syria about thirty years ago. The Cardinal had promised him in the name of the Imperial Government at the time of his mission. Certainly, this promise has not been fulfilled. And this man of religion is left with the minimum requirement for his living needs.

My personal investigation of this matter was in agreement with that of Mr. Beaudin and the Lazarist Father, confirming that Father Thomas was a man of gentle character, and has practiced his sacred religious obligation with tolerance and without discrimination, which has made him an object of love and respect for both Christians and Muslims.

Father Thomas introduced the smallpox vaccine, which was badly needed by the people of Damascus. He utilized it widely with great enthusiasm which deserves our gratitude. This act, in my opinion, deserves the attentive attention and care of the Royal Government, and all friends of humanity. He cherished high hopes for the fulfillment of his request for a retirement salary in his old age, which does not allow him to do much work. I find it necessary to also state that he has very poor sight, being almost blind. And that the presence of this religious man in Damascus who has served the cause of the Holy Land, while depriving himself of a salary he deserves and which he would have received as a Priest for his country, had he worked in his country.

Faithfully

The Source: Preserved Documents of the Foreign Ministry Department of Trade and Continental Affairs Consulate of Damascus Vol. I (1839-1844), Report No. 12, pp. 24-25.

Paris. le 10 Avril 1840

Réponse à cette demande.

Thiers, Le Président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères.

Objet: Allocation au Père Thomas.

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La demande adressée à mon prédécesseur, en faveur de ce religieux...

L'ordre des Franciscains auquel appartient le Père Thomas n'étant pas au nombre de ceux auxquels le gouvernement du Roi alloue une subvention au Levant, il n'y a aucun moyen de donner suite à la demande...

Quant aux réparations que paraît réclamer le couvent des Capucins à Damas, il ne saurait y être pourvu qu'aux frais de cet ordre qui jouit d'ail-leurs d'une allocation annuelle sur les fonds de mon Département.

Source: Mémes archives-même consulat de Damas. vol.1 (1839-1844), instructions 4, fol. 38.

Commentaire: Cette réponse n'avait aucune raison d'être, puisque le Père Thomas avait été assassiné entretemps.

Paris, April 10th, 1840

Response to the Message

To: Thiers; The President of the Council of Ministers, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Subject: Allocation of Salary for Father Thomas

Regarding the request which was transferred to me by my predecessor in regard to the above mentioned man of religion.

The order of the French Church, to which Father Thomas is a member, did not mention him among those who were sent by the Royal Government to the East. There is no way to fulfill his request.

But there are compensations allocated to the Capucins Convents in Damascus, these (compensations) are awarded for such purposes. However these are presented only as annual awards, and are from my department allocations.

Source - Same Documents

Consulate of Damscus Vol. I (1839-1844), Instructions No. 4, p. 38.

Note: There was no need for this response, because Father Thomas was murdered during this period.

Alexandrie, le 5 mars 1840

Cochelet au ministre, le maréchal duc de Dalmatie, Président du Conseil, ministre lai des Affaires Etrangeres.

Objet: L'assassinat du Père Thomas.

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Il y a eu à Damas un assassinat qui a consterné la ville. Un religieux franciscain, protégé de la France a disparu. Et d'après les révélations d'un bai hier juif qui a déclaré avoir été appelé chez un négociant israélite pour couper la gorge de ce prêtre, on suppose qu'il a été la victime du fanatisme des juifs.

Le consul de France et le gouverneur général se sont parfaitement entendus pour taire arrêter ceux que l'on suppose coupables de ce crime, et l'affaire sera poursuivie avec actis ité. Mehemet Ali vient, d'après mes représentations de donner les ordres les plus sévères pour que la punition des coupables ait lieu.

Source: Archives Affaires Étrangères.

Consulat général d'Egypte et dépendances.

Egypte, vol. 9 (1839-1844) Direction politique, rapport n.170, fol.321.

Alexandria, March 5th, 1840

From: Cochelet.

To: The Minister Marshal Duke of Dalmatie, President of the council of Ministers.

Subject: The Assassination of Father Thomas.

A crime was committed in Damascus, the cause of great alarm in the city. A religious French man, respected by France, has disappeared. The investigation has revealed that a Jewish barber confessed that he was called by a Jewish Merchant, who requested him to cut the throat of this Priest. It is assumed that he was a victim of Jewish Fanaticism.

There is a complete understanding between the French Consul and the Governor General to arrest those who supposedly committed the crime. The matter will be pursued relentlessly. It was related to me, by those

who represented me to Mohamad Ali, that he gave his stern orders to punish those who are guilty.

Source: Preserved Document of the French Foreign Ministry, the General Consulate in Egypt.

Egypt. Vol. IX (1839-1844) The Political Administration Report No. 170, p. 321.

Alexandrie, le 2 avril 1840

Cochelet à Thiers, le Président du Conseil, ministre des Affaire. Etrangères.

Objet: L'assassinat du Père Thomas.

L'affaire relative à l'assassinat du Père Thomas, égorgé à Damas par les juifs... a été poursuivie par le comte de Ratti-Menton qui a été parfaitement secondé par le gouverneur général de la Syrie avec beaucoup d'activité et d'énergie.

Je laisse à ce consul le soin de vous rendre compte de toutes les circonstances de cet assassinat qui aura un grand retentissement, si, comme on l'assure et ce qu'on a peine à croire, il a été causé pour un motif religieux. Mais je ne crois pas pouvoir me dispenser de mettre sous vos yeux la copie d'une déclaration envoyée à Mehemet Ali et qui a été faite par un rabbin qui s'est fait musulman, de laquelle il semblerait résulter que le sang humain est nécessaire aux juifs pour célébrer leur Pàque et qu'il en manque à Damas. Cette découverte inattendue a donné lieu de supposer que des individus qui ont disparu depuis longtemps, sans qu'on ait su ce qu'ils étaient devenus et entr'autres des esclaves grecs qui avaient été achetés par les juifs lors de la guerre de Morée, ont été victimes du fanatisme de ces derniers.

Mehemet Ali a ordonné de faire des recherches pour se mettre sur les traces de ces disparitions et il tient de prescrire à son fils Ibrahim Pacha d'agir sans empressement, avec prudence et discernement, afin d'arriver à la connaissance de la vérité dans une affaire qui intéresse le monde entier et qui va soulever de nouvelle et grande animosité contre les juifs.

Le retentissement qu'elle a déjà eu à Smyrne a donné lieu à quelques excès et a mis le grand rabbin Pencas de Segura dans la nécessité de désavouer par une note qui a été rendue publique, la supposition que les juifs se servent de sang chrétien dans la solennité de leur Pâque.

Les poursuites qui seront exercées à Damas contre le grand rabbin Racoub d'Anteb qui a été accusé par le rabbin Moussa Abou Afieh d'avoir reçu le sang du Père Thomas feront sans doute connaître la vérité.

Annexe: la déclartion de Moussa Abou Afieh.

Source: La même que sopra, fol.9-10 et pour l'annexe, fol.11-13.

Alexandria, April 2nd, 1840

From: Cochelet.

To: Thiers, The President of the Council of Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Subject: The Assassination of Father Thomas.

Count Ratti-Menton continued to pursue the assassination case of Father Thomas, who was slain by the Jews in Damascus. He was greatly assisted by the Governor General of Syria, who was also pursuing the investigation with firmness and energy.

I have assigned to this Consul the task of reporting to you the entire circumstances concerning the assassination operation which has caused a great uproar, when it became absolutely certain that the cause of the crime was religious which was hard to believe. I believe it is my obligation to submit to you a copy of the confession sent to Mohamad Ali, containing the testimony of the Rabbi, who declared his conversion to Islam, which indicates that the Jews need human blood for the celebration of Yum Kippur, the remembrance of the Jews departure from Egypt. This year they did not have blood available to them in Damascus. This unexpected discovery has opened up a wide range of speculation and suggestion that persons who have disappeared a long time ago, with unknown circumstances surrounding their disappearance, may have been victims of this Jewish fanaticism. And among those who have disappeared are the Greek slaves who were bought by the Jews during the Muree War.

Mohamad Ali ordered a search and an investigation of those who had previously disappeared. He wrote to his son, Ibrahim Pasha, to move slowly and carefully, and to work in a secretive manner in order to reach the truth about a case which was highly important to the world, and which might stir a new, great hatred against the Jews.

These repentant echoes in Izmir opened the way for some radical sentiments, which caused the Grand Rabbi Pencas Segura to issue a note openly declaring his disapproval of the crime. This also led to the assumption that the Jews used Christian blood for the celebration of Yum Kippur.

The immediate continuance of these investigations in Damascus which were conducted against the Grand Rabbi, Moussa Bokhour Yehuda, known as the Salahiki, who was accused by Rabbi Mussa Abou Al—Afieh of receiving the blood of Father Thomas, would certainly uncover the truth.

Annex: The declaration of Musse Abou Al-Afieh.

Source: Ibid., pp. 9-10, for annex, pp. 11-13.

Alexandrie, le 6 avril 1840

Cochelet à Thier, le Président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires Etrangères.

Objet: L'assassinat du P.Thomas-Les juifs de Damas et l'Autriche (extrait).

Mr de Ratti-Menton me rend compte de quelques discussions assez vives qu'il a eues avec le consul d'Autriche à Damas et qu'il vous fera sans doute connaître, à l'occasion de la procédure relative à l'assassinat du Père Thomas, d'après laquelle il semblerait que le consul d'Autriche cherche à dérober quelques coupables, qui sont sous sa protection, à l'action de la justice dans des vues que l'on suppose sordides.

Je viens d'apprendre que Mr le consul général d'Autriche à Alexandrie devait écrire à son gouvernement dans des termes peu modérés pour se plaindre de la conduite de Mr Ratti-Menton. Il est probable que le Cabinet de Vienne vous soumettra à cet égard une représentation.

Je vous prie, Mr le Ministre, d'ajourner votre réponse jusqu'à ce que Mr le consul du Roi A Damas vous ait donné tous les éclaircissements qui pourront vous mettre à même de fixer votre opinion. Je crois pouvoir vous assurer d'avance qu'ils auront lieu de vous satisfaire.

Source: Archives Affaires Etrangères

Consulat général d'Alexandrie- Direction commerciale et du contentieux. vol.28, fol.511, (nr.179).

Remarque: Le même document, mimes archives- Consulat général d'Egypte et dépendances, vol.10 (1840), fol.17-18.

Alexandria, April 6th, 1840

From: Cochelet.

To: Thier, The President of Council of Ministers and Foreign Minister.

Subject: The Assassination of Father Thomas and the Jews of Damascus and Austria.

I was informed by Ratti-Menton of a sharp argument between him and the Consul of Austria regarding the proceedings of the assassination of Father Thomas. It appears that the Consul of Austria is trying to secure the protection of some of the guilty ones who are under his protection, and to intervene with justice, and to disregard opinions he assumes to be stupid. Mr. Ratti-Menton will inform you regarding this.

Also, I happen to know, at this moment, that the General Consul in Alexandria, submitted to his government a report containing very strong words, expressing his irritation with Mr. Ratti-Menton. And in all probability the Government of Austria will send its objection of the matter.

Please, Minister Sir, you may delay your response until the King's Consul presents all clarification and information which will enable you to make your decision. I am very sure before hand that these clarifications will win your satisfaction.

Source: Preserved Documents of the Foreign Ministry, The Consul General in Alexandria, Department of Commerce and Global Affairs. Vol. XXVIII, p. 511.

Paris, le 28 avril 1840

Le ministre Thiers à Cochelet.

Objet: Assassinat du P.Thomas et mission d'enquête de Mr Desmeloizes.

Vous avez été informé par la correspondance du roi à Damas des circonstances relatives à la disparition d'un missionnaire catholique placé sous sa protection et qu'on suppose avoir été assassiné...

... (insuffisance du rapport de Mr Ratti-Menton).

Cependant des bruits généralement répandus en Europe et qui tendent à présenter sa conduite sous les couleurs les plus défavorables me font un devoir de faire éclairer sur les lieux mêmes et le plus promptement possible l'obscurité qui enveloppe pour moi les circonstances de ce malheureux événement.

D'où la nécessité de l'envoi de Mr Desmeloizes, par la voie la plus prompte à Damas, avec mission de vérifier l'ensemble des faits, tant à l'égard de Mr Ratti-Menton qu'à celui des autorités locales et de me transmettre le résultat de cette enquête par votre intermédiaire...

Source: Archives Affaires Etrangères

Consulat général d'Alexandrie- Direction commerciale et du contentieux, vol.28, fol.438 (nr.63).

Paris, April 28, 1840

From: Minister Thiers.

To: Cochelet.

Subject: The Assassination of Father Thomas and the Investigation Committee, Mr. Desmeloizes presiding.

The Representative of the King's Consul in Damascus had informed you about the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of a Catholic Missionary among those who were under his protection, and it is assumed that he was assassinated.

(Deficiency in Mr. Ratti-Menton's Report)

A General uproar has been heard in Europe during this period, trying to pin all kinds of accusation, and in an inappropriate manner, against Mr. Ratti-Menton, which makes it urgent for me to explain the situation as soon as possible in order to clarify the surrounding obscurity regarding this evil incident.

Due to this urgent necessity, I have sent Mr. Desmeloizes, to arrive in Damascus with due haste, to assume the task of investigating the happenings, with whatever is available to Mr. Ratti-Menton, or by cooperation with the local authorities, pending the results of this investigation which he will deliver to me through your office.

Source: Ibid. pp. 438.

Paris, le 9 mai 1840

Le ministre à Cochelet.

Objet: Assassinat du P.Thomas et mission d'enquête de Mr Desmeloizes.

... (Raison de cette mission: insuffisance des rapports du consul).

La prudence de cet élève-consul me persuade d' ailleurs qu'il saura apprécier la nature délicate de cette mission confidentielle et concilier l'obligation qu'elle lui impose d'épuiser tous les moyens d'information pour éclairer les faits avec les ménagements que réclame la position du consul du roi...

Source: même archives- Alexandrie, vol.28, fo1.454 (nr.64).

Paris May 9th, 1840

From: The Minister.

To: Cochelet.

Subject: The Assassination of Father Thomas and the Investigation Committee Mr. Desmeloizes presiding.

The reason for the formation of this Committee is due to insufficient information in the Consul's reports.

The reservoir of intelligence and caution possessed by the Assistant Consul convinced me that the nature of this delicate and secret mission demands the utmost concern, and commitment for whatever is needed in this investigation including utilizing of all available means in order to obtain the information which will shed light on the events of the incident, and to take the appropriate measures needed, in accordance with the status and opinions of the King's Consul.

Source: Ibid. p. 454.

Constantinople, le 21 avril 1840

Représentants des israélites de Damas à l'ambassadeur de France.

Objet: Pétition en favour des juifs de Damas, au sujet de l'assassinat du Père Thomas.

Monsieur l'Ambassadeur,

Les soussignés, agissant au nom de la Communauté israélite de Damas, ont l'honneur d'exposer à votre Excellence, que d'après l'absence du P.Thomas, capucin protégé français et son domestiqe, dans la dite ville, sur des soupçons élevés seulement d'avoir vu le dit capucin dans le quartier des israélites et de ne pas l'avoir vu sortir, Mr le comte de Ratti-Menton consul de France à la résidence de Damas, a fait arrêter et conduire dans les prisons du gouvernement local plusieurs israélites, qu'on a horriblement tourmentés, lequel, au milieu de ses souffrances dans l'espoir de s'en libérer, a déposé que les 7 négociants israélites de première classe l'ont fait appeler pour égorger le dit capucin, que, d'après son dire ont été arrêtés les dits respectables 7 individus dont la probité est connue encore en France par les premières maisons de commerce avec lesquelles ils sont en relation d'affaires depuis de longues années. Et sur cette calomnie on les a horriblement tourmentés, que deux de ces négociants ont succombé, ainsi que 4 des principaux arrêtés. Les restants, préférant la mort aux horribles tourments se sont déclarés coupables. Mais, aussitôt qu'on leur accorda un moment pour respirer, ils juraient ne rien savoir et protestaient de leur innocence.

Et comme, d'après la loi, les accusés ne peuvent être interrogés qu'après avoir entendu les dépositions de témoins à charge et à décharge et jamais mis à la torture, les pétitionnaires se croient en raison de recourir à l'équité de Votre Excellence, sachant qu'elle propose (sic) des sentiments philanthropiques pour requérir ainsi qu'ils requièrent que lui plaise inter-venir auprès de Mr le consul à Damas pour le sommer d'agir avec humanité et suivent le, institutions de procédure criminelle adoptées par les nations cis ilisées.

Ils ont l'honneur d'être...

Signature: Abrahan Asquenaze- Isaac Becar Moshé- Hanna Becar Isaac.

Constantinople, April 21, 1840

From: The Representatives of the Jews in Damascus.

To: The Ambassador of France.

Subject: Petitions presented by the Jews of Damascus regarding the assassination of Father Thomas.

Mr. Ambassador,

The undersigned, on behalf of the Jewish community in Damascus, are honored to present to your Excellency, these facts regarding the disappearance of Father Thomas Al-Capuci, a French subject, protected in his person and residence in the city of Damascus by France, causing a wave of suspicions toward the Jews, solely because someone saw Father Thomas entering the Jewish Quarters and did not see him leave immediately following this, Comte Ratti-Menton, the French Consul who resides in Damascus, arrested a number of Jews, detaining them in the local prisons of the Government. Some of them were subjected to torture.

Among those arrested was a barber, who was frightened by the torture. In hopes of winning his freedom, and to save himself the pain of torture, he accused seven notable Jews from the community. He said that they called him to slay the priest. Relying solely on his testimony, the seven most respected members of the Jewish community, who enjoy high reputations in France, and are well known by the high commercial houses, who have worked with them for many years, were arrested. They were subjected to frightful torture, because of these false accusations. Two of them broke down and four others followed. The rest preferred death to this frightful torture and have confessed that they were guilty. But the minute they found the opportunity to reflect on the matter, they have sworn that they knew nothing regarding the crime and hold fast to their innocence.

The law demands that the accused should not be interrogated until they are informed about the testimonies of the witnesses, those to their advantage as well as those against them, and they must not be subjected to torture.

The parties presenting this petition on their behalf are within their rights in presenting themselves to your Excellency's sense of justice. We know that they are proposing a humane request for intervention with Mr. Consul of Damascus, urging him to work in the spirit of humanity, and to follow the directives included by the criminal justice codes, which have been adopted by civilized nations.

We have the honor to sign:

Ibrahan Asquenazo, Isaac Becar Moshe'-Hanna Becar Isaac.

Constantinople, le 25 avril 1840

Le comte de Pontois au consul de Ratti-Menton.

Monsieur le consul,

Je crois devoir vous transmettre copie d'une requête qui vient de m'être adressée au nom de la communauté israélite de Damas, concernant les poursuites judiciaires auxquelles a donné lieu la disparition du Père Thomas.

Je suis persuadé d'avance que votre conduite, en cette circonstance, loin de mériter les inculpations dont elle est l'objet de la part des réclamants, a été de tout point, conforme à l'esprit d'équité et de philanthropie qui doit caractériser les actes de tout agent français. Mais comme je n'ai reçu de vous jusqu'à présent aucune information sur les détails de cette affaire et la part que vous y avez prise. Et comme, d'un autre côté, il me paraît malheureusement certain qu'on a, en effet, employé, pour venir à la découverte de la vérité, des moyens odieux que l'humanité repousse, et que la législation turque a elle-même abolis, je vous serai obligé de me mettre, aussi promptement que possible, en mesure de répondre à la requête qui m'est adressée et de repousser formellement, dans l'intérêt du gouverne-ment du roi, les allégations qu'elle contient.

Recevez...

Source: Archives Affaires Etrangères

Ambassade, Turquie, Direction politique. vol.280, fol.224-225 et 226, (nr.38).

Constantinople April 25, 1840

From: Comte de Pontois.

To: Consul Ratti-Menton.

Mr. Consul:

I see it as my duty to transmit to you a copy of the petition presented to me in the name of the Jewish community of Damascus. It is a petition related to the judicial follow up in the case of the disappearance of Father Thomas.

I am convinced beforehand that your behavior in this case, is far from the accusations contained in this petition, and that you have behaved in a manner befitting to the spirit of justice, love, and humanity, which characterizes the behavior of every French citizen. However, since I have not received from you any detailed information in this case and the proceedings you have followed I suspect people in the government used torture and bad procedures to get at the truth. These ugly methods are unacceptable to humanity in order to obtain the truth. Even Turkish Laws forbid the use of these methods. I find myself compelled to ask you to provide me, as soon as possible, with the proceedings which will allow me to reply to the contents of the petition which was presented to me, and to reply in a decisive manner. This is in the interest of the King's Government to expel the claims of the petition.

Source: Archives, French Foreign Ministry, The Embassy, Turkey, Directory of Politics. Vol. 280 pp. 224-226 (No. 38).

Alexandrie, le 30 avril 1840

Cochelet au Président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires Etrangères.

Objet: L'assassinat du Père Thomas.

Résumé de l'introduction: rappel du rapport du 4 avril- Réception du rapport du consul de Damas contenant les procès- verbaux des interrogatoires relatifs au P.Thomas, dans l'attente de ceux de son domestique...

«On a déjà cherché cependant à jeter des doutes tant sur le crime que sur les causes. On a voulu même incriminer les actes et le caractère de Mr Ratti-Menton.

Ce fonctionnaire honorable, justement blessé du reproche que l'on a fait à son humanité et du soupçon qu'on a osé élever sur sa délicatesse, m'a écrit la lettre en date du 24 avril, nr.II, accompagnée de deux pièces, avec prière d'adresser copie à Paris.

Vous penserez sans doute qu'il n'y a pas lieu à autoriser l'enquête sol-licitée par Mr Ratti et vous reconnaîtrez par la lecture de toutes les lettres et pièces l'injustice de l'accusation portée contre lui.

Je regrette toutefois que des amis imprudents des juifs ou des avocats maladroits, gagnés déjà sans doute par leurs largesses, cherchent à altérer ou à dénaturer les faits, car ils mettent ceux qui les connaissent parfaite-ment dans la necéssité de les publier, en les appuyant de toutes les preuves qui peuvent faire jaillir la vérité et convaincre les consciences les plus timorées.

La vérité, une fois connue et répandue, peut réveiller toutes les haines contre les juifs et donner lieu à de grands excès. Ce qu'il y aurait eu de plus prudent et de plus sage de la part des juifs eût été de laisser considérer le meurtre de Damas comme l'action d'un rabbin fanatique qui avait excité quelques-uns de ses coreligionnaires. Mais, en voulant nier le crime et l'usage du sang, on s'est exposé à une controverse qui va donner lieu à des graves ressentiments. On a déjà fait circuler en Syrie et ici une copie de quelques paragraphes du Talmud contre les chrétiens.

Quant à moi, j'ai évité, autant que possible, de me prononcer dans une affaire dont la poursuite appartient exclusivement à Mr le consul du roi à Damas qui est entièrement indépendant dans l'excercie de ses fonctions judiciares.

Je me suis borné, jusqu'à présent, à lui envoyer le 10 mars l'ordre de Mehémet Ali qui ordonnait à Chérif Pacha, gouverneur général de Syrie, d'activ°* les démarches relatives à la découverte de l'assassinat. En l'envoyant à Mr Ratti-Menton, j'ai ajouté:

«Vous veillerez seulement à ce que la poursuite et les arrestations qui auront lieu pour arriver à connaire la vérité soient faites avec les ménagements qui sont dans notre législation et que l'on doit observer envers de simples accusés. Il faut que la vérité se découvre sans que l'on soit obligé d'employer des mesures qui répugnent à nos moeurs et qui ne sont pas de notre époque».

J'ai écrit aussi particulièrement à Mr Ratti-Menton de laisser au seul consul d'Autriche la responsabilité de ses actes, s'il ne punit pas ceux de nos nationaux que la procédure signale comme coupables, en ajoutant qu'ils seraient justiciables de l'opinion publique qui les flétrirait, si leur gouvernement ne sévissait pas.

Mais, en traçant à Mr le consul du roi à Damas une ligne de conduite sage et prudente, je pense que Votre Excellence qui a sous les yeux les pièces du dossier et qui doit encore en recevoir d'autres, repoussera les allégations de ceux qui exploitent les affaires de Damas dans le sens de leurs intérêts et de leurs passions et qui cherchent à représenter la conduite du consul du roi comme illégale et arbitraire et même vénale, lorsque l'opinion publique rend heureusement à son caractère ferme, humain et intègre une entière justice.

Je suis...

Annexe: le rapport du consul Ratti-Menton. Voir page suivante.

Alexandria, April 30, 1840

From: Cochelet.

To: The President of the Council, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Subject: The Assassination of Father Thomas.

A Brief Introduction: Referring to the report of April and the report which we received from the Consul in Damascus, which contained the minutes of interrogation regarding the case of Father Thomas, we are awaiting the latest developments.

At this time they are trying to cast doubts, regarding the question of the crime, and the subject of its cause. They also want to accuse Mr. Ratti-Menton, as to his actions and his character.

This honest public official has been wounded by the accusations which question his humanity, and the doubts which they have dared to cast against his fine behavior. He sent me a message on April 24th, accompanied by two documents, and he requested of me to send him a copy of it to Paris.

You must certainly be thinking that there is no room to allow criticism against the investigation conducted by Mr. Ratti. You will understand after rereading all messages and reports the depth of these unjust and false accusations which have been directed against him.

At the same time, I feel sorry for the way the friends of the Jews have behaved and the behavior of their lawyer who has been lacking in a proper and upright manner, in order to receive the spoils given him. They have attempted to forge and change the nature of the events, subjecting those who knew them well to a character assassination campaign. They have relied upon any proof capable of hiding the truth in order to convince, to the contrary, those who have a clean and pure conscience.

The mere disclosure of these facts may ignite prejudices against the Jews and, prepare the way for wide reactions against them. However, the

Jews have sufficient caution, and cleverness to avoid a slip up in this murder case in Damascus. This case is the scheme of a fanatic Rabbi who managed to stir up a number of his religion brothers. In their attempt to deny the crime, and their denial of the use of blood, they have become subject to contradictions which have provided an opportunity for serious consequences. Presently there are some people in Syria and in Egypt who are distributing verses from the Talmud which are anti-Christian.

For me personally, I tried in every way possible to avoid becoming involved or intervening in a case that was considered to be within the sphere of the jurisdiction, of the King's Consul in Damascus. He is completely independent in the practice of his legal activities.

I limited myself until March 10th, from involving him until Mohamad Ali's order to the Governor General of Syria, Sharif Pasha was received, an order which requested him to work hard in order to discover the murderer. I also attached to this order, which I sent to Mr. Ratti-Menton, the following message,

"Make sure that the proceedings of this case, and the arrests that take place as a result arrive only at obtaining the truth in accordance with our laws, and jurisprudence, protecting the less important (secondary status) of the accused. The discovery of the truth is a must, however, without the use of methods which are not in agreement with our traditions and which are inappropriate to our age."

I also wrote in a personal manner to Mr. Ratti-Menton to hold the Austrian Consul responsible for his acts if those persons proved to be guilty are not punished, then public opinion had the right to abhor and to disapprove of this act.

With wise and careful behavior by the King's Consul in Damascus, I am of the opinion that your Excellency may work to dispel the false accusations of those who are trying to exploit the situation in Damascus for their own interest through their use of emotionalism and the falsification of the behavior and actions of the King's Consul, instead of accusing him of being unjust and heavy handed. Without regard to legitimacy, or even bribery, justice can prevail completely when a sense of satisfaction has been restored and the public believes that these people have been dealt with in an honest and humane manner.

Annexe au rapport du consul Cochelet du 30 avril 1840

Rapport du consul à Damas Ratti-Menton. le 24 avril 1840

Objet: le consul autrichien el ses tentatives de défendre les responsables juifs.

Monsieur le Consul général,

Nia lettre nr.l0 venait d'être expédiée, lorsqu'il m'est tombé entre les mains un document dont je ne veux pas tarder à vous donner communication. Ce document se trouve ci-joint. C'est la traduction d'une lettre

écrite en dernier lieu par Mr Laurin (Consul général d'Autriche à Alexandrie) à Mr Merlato (consul d'Autriche à Damas). J'ignore si avant sa démarche auprès du vice-roi et surtout avant son invitation à Mr d'Appony (ambassadeur d'Autriche à Paris) il y a eu sur cette affaire quelque conférence avec vous. Il n'en parle et je conclus que Mr Laurin a été en cette occasion ce qu'il devait être après nos précécents mutuels en Sicile.

Mr le consul général d'Autriche se plaint sans doute, d'après le référé de Mir Merlato de mes actes arbitraires a l'égard de Mr Picciotto et de Mr Ayrout. Ce dernier est qualifié de négociant autrichien. Et d'abord, Mr Ayrout est un arabe. Il était écrivain d'Ihrahin Pacha. Le généralissime le chassa de son service pour cause d'inconduite. En second lieu, Mr Ayrout, comme je l'ai écrit au consul d'Autriche n'est point propriétaire de la maison où j'ai été faire une perquisition. Cette maison appartient au beau-père de Mr Ayrout, le Saydha (Saydah), Raya, lequel l'habite avec toute sa famille. Il y logeait son gendre, en passant. Depuis cette visite, Mr Ayrout a quitté la chambre qu'il occupait et s'en est allé habiter autre part. Peut-on d'après cela qualifier raisonnablement d'arbitraire mon entrée dans une maison de Raya avec le consentement exprès de l'autorité locale qui me faisait assister par ses agents de police'?

Pour ce qui concerne Mr Picciotto, il m'est impossible de ne pas être un peu plus long. Et encore, hien des incidents doivent être passés pour ne pas être interminables.

Dans le principe de cette affaire du Père Thomas, cet individu se trouvait un soir chez Mr Beaudin, où il y avait, outre les chrétiens du pays, Mr le consul d'Angleterre, le l'èrre Eustet, lazariste, et Mr Santi, sujet français et pharmacien de l'hôpital de Damas. La question était tombée sur la nouvelle du jour. Mr Santi apostropha avec une telle violence le Mr Picciotto et menaça avec une si véhémente énergie de se porter à des excès contre les juifs vis-à-vis desquels il prétendait que j'usais de faiblesse que je le fis conduire immédiatement dans la prison du consulat d'où il ne sortit que le lendemain, par considération pour sa famille dont il est l'unique soutien et d'après la promesse formelle qu'il me fit de s'abstenir désormais de toute activité illégale.

Le 10 février, un français, délégué par moi, devait continuer avec le consentement du consul d'Autriche et l'assisstance de son 'chancelier, qui est juif ionien, quelques visites domiciliaires dans des maisons de protégés autrichiens ou toscans. Mr Picciotti vient me trouver pour me demander d'exempter sa maison de toute perquisition, parce que, disait il, cela ferait un mauvais effet dans le public et sa maison ne fut pas visitée.

Pendant que le barbier juif Soliman restait chez moi où j'espérais l'amener à des révélations, en lui promettant son pardon, Mr Pissiotti se présenta encore au consulat avec le chancelier de Mr Merlato et j'étais si peu disposé à agir arbitrairement vis-à-vis de lui que par un excès de con-fiance aveugle et contrairement aux usages judiciaires, sur sa demande expresse faite devant plusieurs témoins, je consentis à ce qu'il eut un entre-tien particulier avec le barbier. Le même jour, j'ai su qu'il avait profité de cet entretien pour engager le barbier à persister dans ses dénégations. Et pourtant je ne l'ai pas fait citer comme suborneur de témoins.

J'ai eu tort, je l'avoue, de lui avoir appliqué le qualificatif d'assassin avant une décision judiciaire sur cette question. Mais, la rétractation que je fais ici, je l'ai faite à Mr Merlato dans ma lettre. Cette expression était le résultat d'un mouvement de véracité que Mr Picciotto avait provoqué par son apostrophe hors de saison, ses menaces du consulat et du gouverne-ment autrichien et l'étalage pompeux de sa généalogie. A propos de généalogie, je vous demanderais le consul général, de faire ici une digression à la lettre de Mr Laurin.

J'apprends, de source certaine, que Mr Eliaou Picciotto, oncle du président et consul général d'Autriche à Alep, s'est plaint au généralissime (Ibrahim Pacha) de ce que, sans égard pour son nom et sa qualité consulaire on avait agi si légèrement envers son neveu. Mr Eliaou Picciotto qui veut aujourd'hui que les vertus sortent de leur caractère d'individualité pour s'étendre à la famille, co'_sentirait-il pareillement à ce que les crimes perdissent leur caractère de peronnalité? Que peut signifier cette prétention de faire rentrer dans la balance de la justice le poids d'un nom quel-conque? Mr Eliaou Picciotto a-t-il fait valoir un pareil

argument devant te tribunal toscan qui a condamné aux galères de Livourne, pour cause d'assassinat d'un capitaine, un autre de ses neveux, cousin de celui que l'on poursuit ici? Et le frère de celui-ci n'a-t-il pas été obligé de quitter Alexandrie pour cause d'escroquerie et n'a-t-il pas abandonné lestement Constantinople où il allait être poursuivi à la suite d'un vol de schales? Pour que toutes choses fussent égales, il faudrait que la famille Picciotto, qui veut que l'on tienne compte de ses vertus à ses membres gangrenés, consentit en dernière analyse à subir la clause d'ignominie pour les vices de ces derniers. Mais je reviens à la lettre de Mr Laurin.

Je passe d'abord à l'accusation des actes arbitraires contre les juifs en général, accusation qui, d'après les termes de cette lettre, doit être l'objet d'une négociation spéciale d'ambassadeur à souverain. Il faut me connaître bien peu (et Mr Laurin me connaît assez) pour me lancer une pareille accusation. Qu'entend-il par actes arbitraires? Sont-ce de visites domiciliaires dans des maisons dénoncées comme suspectes? Tous les jours et dans tous les p'ays du monde de pareilles visites ont lieu. Et, ayant lieu par l'entremise de l'autorité constituée, elles n'ont jamais été qualifiées d'arbitraires. Sont-ce les arrestations préventives sur dénonciation de témoins? Mais tous les jours aussi, dans les affaires criminelles comme dans les questions de complot, nos procureurs du roi en France et ailleurs les magistrats spéciaux font opérer des arrestations qui n'amènent d'autres résultats définitifs que la mise en liberté pour cause de non lieu? Est-ce là de l'arbitraire?

Ah, si ce mot a été employé dans l'intention de faire comprendre par son usage vague et indéterminé que j'ai exercé ou fait exercer des actes de violence quelconque. Alors, je ne ménage pas l'expression à quelque adresse qu'elle doive aller et je donne un démenti formel à l'accusateur.

Si j'avais été le partisan de la violence, je ne serai pas intervenu d'une manière énergique auprès des populations musulmanes et chrétiennes. Et peut-être aujourd'hui il n'existerait pas un juif à Damas. Mille témoins pourront attester ce que j'avance. Ils pourront dire que pendant plusieurs jours et plusieurs nuits les cawas du consulat ont dû rester avec la patrouille dans le quartier juif pour empêcher les chétiens et les turcs de se porter à des actes de violence contre des hommes du peuple que je n'ai jamais con-fondu dans l'accusation avec les véritables coupables. Et les enfants arrêtés par ordre de Schérif Pacha, dans l'espoir que les parents feraient quelques révélations, n'ont-ils pas été rendus à leurs familles sur ma demande?

Le Sieur Schehadé Stambouli, frère d'un des assassins contumaces, n'est-ce pas moi qui lui ait fait donner 1a liberté dont il n'a profité que pour se livrer à de nouvelles intrigues auprès de Mr Péretz, juif allemand converti. N'ai-je pas depuis trois semaines adressé inutilement plusieurs demandes, tant verbales qu'écrites, au gouverneur général pour l'engager à relâcher le Sieur Moussa Farhi, père d'un autre accusé contumace et dans l'arrestation duquel je ne suis entré pour rien?

Je dirai plus. J'ai cherché, en cas où la chose serait possible, à faire ouvrir la porte de la prison au Malien Raphaêl qui a été l'un des premiers a entrever dans le principe la marche de l'affaire et dont le fils, sans aucun mauvais traitement quelconque, s'est déclaré un des complices dans l'assassinat du domestique. Mr Beaudin, ayant été allé le voir dans la prison et ne le trouvant pas convenablement logé, n'a-t-il pas demandé, après m'avoir consulté, qu'on lui donnât une meilleure chambre? Sont-ce tous ces actes qui constituent des actes arbitraires? Oh, alors oui, je me déclare coupable et que Mr Laurin prononce.

Encore un mot sur cet objet.

Le 29 février, la culpabilité des prévenus, étant constatée par la découverte des restes du P.Thomas et des circonstances en dépendant, Schérif Pacha me fit dire par Mr Beuadin que les accusés étant condamnés. Mais que si j'y consentais, il croyait que ce serait bien de surseoir à leur exécution jusqu'à l'arrivée des ordres du généralissime. Ma réponse ne fut pas douteuse. Et si j'avais été tellement altéré du sang de mes semblables, ces hommes n'existeraient pas aujourd'hui.

Il reste à traiter la question relative à la jalousie qu'inspirent les richesses des juifs. Est-ce moi qui en suis jaloux? Mr Laurin ne le dit pas formellement. Mais, comme dans l'ensemble de sa lettre mon nom seul se trouve énoncé, je dois m'appliquer l'accusation.

Si Mr Laurin avait été loyalement informé, il aurait su que les juifs de Damas eussent payé de tout l'or qu'ils possédaient une transaction sur l'assasinat du Père Thomas. Ils savent que depuis longtemps ils mettent sur leur responsabilité la disparition d'une foule d'individus appartenant à d'autres croyances. Vous comprenez, dès lors, Mr le consul général, qu'il s'agit pour eux d'une affaire capitale. La procédure, aujourd'hui pendante, tombant par l'intervention du consul de France, toutes les inculpations précédentes rentreront naturellement dans le néant. La condamnation de quelques individus leur importait fort peu. Au fond, pour arriver à cette condamnation, il fallait passer par des révélations sur quelques passages de leurs livres et à des explications sur plusieurs de leurs pratiques religieuses. Là était toute la question.

Je rougis jusqu'au blanc des yeux d'être condamné à entrer dans des détails terre à terre. Mais, je ne puis m'empêcher de dire, et des hommes honorables peuvent en témoigner, que pour les sommes assez rondes qui ont été offertes à des personnes qui ne figurent qu'en second plan dans la poursuite de cette affaire, j'aurais pu profiter de cette circonstance pour satisfaire largement ma prétendue jalousie. En effet, Mr le consul général, outre deux schales de chachemire et deux fleurs en diamants offertes à Mr Beaudin, on a proposé à cet employé 150 mille Piastres, s'il parvenait à détruire mes convictions sur le fait de l'assassinat. Vous comprenez la réponse qui a dû être faite par cet employé. Mr Chubli, qui m'a offert son assistance gratuite pour toutes les écritures que j'aurais à faire en langue arabe pendant que Mr Beaudin était occupé aux recherches avec moi, Mr Chubli a reçu d'un nommé Eliahou Nahmed, joallier juif, en présence du Dr Salina, protégé anglais, la proposition de 1000 (mille) bourses, s'il voulait s'employer en faveur de la question juive. Ces propositions ont été entamées deux fois et deux fois elles ont été repoussées.

Je le répète, si le consulat du roi avait voulu faire de cette question une question d'argent, et moi et tout ce qui m'entoure, nous pouvions puiser largement dans ces trésors tant vantés des juifs.

Mais non. Et ici j'en appelle au peu de conscience qui peut rester aux accusateurs. Une pareille pensée n'est venue à personne, et c'était pour prévenir les tentations de corruption que, dès le principe, j'ai eu l'honneur de vous prier de demain à son Altesse le vice-roi des ordres pour que les employés subalternes du gouvernement fussent surveillés sévèrement. Dès le principe aussi, lorsque les juifs notables, et parmi eux étaient la plupart de ceux qui figurent dans le procès, lorsque, dis-je, les juifs virent chez moi en députation, je leur dis de m'assister. Je les prévins, en outre, qu'ils évitassent par un zèle inconsidéré de faire de cette question une question de sectes. Le barbier venait seulement d'être arrêté. Je leur dis de bien faire attention que l'argent ne prévaudrait pas contre mon énergie et contre ma volonté bien formelle de pousser la procédure jusqu'à son dernier terme. Ils ne m'ont pas voulu croire.

Et ce qu'ils n'ont pas pu faire ici par l'argent, il est probable qu'ils l'ont essayé ailleurs.

J'ai dû entrer dans tous ces détails, Mr le consul général, parce que je tenais à faire ressortir l'énormité de l'accusation que Mr Laurin prétend faire peser sur moi. Cette accusation porte sur deux points bien explicites:

1- Actes arbitraires contre des sujets autrichiens dont un soi-disant tel.

2- Actes arbitraires contre les juifs de Damas.

La troisième accusation, celle de jalousie et par conséquent du désir de dépouiller les juifs n'était pas formulée d'une manière assez claire. Quant à présent, elle ne pourra être établie que par suite d'une enquête. Et c'est à cette enquête que j'en veux venir. Je vous prie, Mr le consul général, d'avoir la bonté d'user de tout votre crédit auprès de Son Excelence Mr le ministre des Affaires Etrangères pour que le Département fasse faire une enquête sévère sur les lieux touchant ma conduite dans l'affaire du double assassinat du Père Thomas et de son domestique. Le gouvernement du Roi se convaincra, s'il en a besoin, que les 17 ans

d'honorables services que Je compte au ministère n'ont pas pu être maculés dans cette circonstance, qu'ils ne le seront jamais.

En attendant le résultat des nouvelles contenues dans la lettre de Mr Laurin et que Mr Merlato fait répandre dans le quartier juif avec une affectatin que je m'abstiens de qualifier, et que non seulment les juifs étrangers s'attaquent aux chrétiens, mais que les juifs rayas, enhardis par des promesses d'un puissant soutien, maltraitent les algériens à cause de leur qualité de français. C'est ce que vous vous convaincrez par la lecture de la plainte, ci-jointe, qui m'a été portée hier par un des sujets du Roi.

J'ai l'honneur...

P.S.: Votre dépêche nr.6 m'arrive à l'instant. J'envoie âu ministre tout ce que j'ai pu terminer de ce volumineux procès-verbal. J'ai l'honneur de vous envoyer ci-joint la suite de première partie que j'ai expédié par la poste hier, comme je n'ai pas eu le temps de faire copier le présent rapport. Si vous croyez, Mr le consul général, qu'il soit nécessaire que le ministre en ait connaissance, je vous serai vivement obligé, si vous voulez avoir la bonté de lui en faire remettre copie.

Annexe: Copie de la traduction d'une lettre écrite en arabe de Damas à Beyrouth par une personne appartenant au consulat d'Autriche.

«Hier par la poste du gouvernement venant d'Alexandrie, Mr Merlato a reçu une lettre de Mr Laurin qui contient ce qui suit:

«J'ai reçu votre lettre avec la copie du journal et j'ai pris connaissance des actes arbitraires qui ont eu lieu à l'égard de Isaac Picciotto, ainsi que de l'entrée du consul de France avec des soldats dans la maison de Joseph Ayrouth, négociant autrichien. Je me suis transporté de suite chez le vice-roi. Je lui ai donné avis de tout ce qui était arrivé et j'ai compris de tout ce qu'a dit Son Altesse qu'elle croit que tout ce qui est arrivé aux juifs de Damas est un résultat de la jalousie qu'on porte à leurs richesses et ce que j'ai cru pouvoir en déduire c'est que le vice-roi veut lui-même voir cette affaire à Alexandrie et allait envoyer un ordre à Schérif Pacha de cesser les tortures contre les juifs. J'ai écrit à l'ambassadeur d'Autriche à paris, afin qu'il aille en personne chez le roi lui notifier officiellement les actes arbitraires du consul de France à Damas contre les juifs et particulièrement contre les sieurs Picciotto et Ayrouth. Tenez-vous ferme. Je vous appuie autant que cela sera possible, de toute puissance de l'Autriche. Vous avez très bien fait de ne pas croire cette affaire contre les juifs, car leur richesse leur attire toujours la jalousie».

Lorsque cette lettre est arrivée ici, Mr Merlato a envoyé ces bonnes ouvelles dans la contrée des juifs. Mais, au sérail, rien de semblable n'est ncore parvenu. On dit que le gouvernement n'a pas reçu de lettre, mais les ouvelles des entours du consulat de France sont que le vice-roi a donné ordre de tenir ferme dans l'affaire des juifs. Et les gens de bon sens parmi es juifs n'ont pas espoir de démentir ce qui a été prouvé contre eux et contre la traduction de leurs livres faite par eux au Pacha et qui prouve que le sang de tous ceux qui travaillent le samedi leur appartient.

annexe: traduction du Talmud adopté en Syrie. Passages concernant les chrétiens.

Chapitre I.

Dans les églises des chrétiens. Il ne se dit et ne se fait que ce qui est contraire à la vérité. Du reste, elle ne diffère pas de celle de paiens. Le devoir d'un juif est de travailler au renversement de ces églises.

L'Evangile des chrétiens n'est qu'une doctrine de péché déclarée ouvertement. Le devoir d'un juif est de le briller quoiqu'il s'y trouve le nom de Dieu.

Chapitre I, paragraphe IV.

Le devoir des juifs est de maudire les chrétiens trois fois par jour et de demander à Dieu de les anéantir tous, spécialement leurs rois et leurs gouvernements. C'est un précepte dont l'observance concerne particulièrement les chefs de la doctrine. Ils doivent aussi exciter à la haine conrte les chrétiens.

Dieu a ordonné au peuple juif de s'emparer de l'argent des chrétiens par tous les moyenss possibles, soit par trafic, soit par finesse, soit par fourberie, soit même par vol.

Chapitre II, paragraphe IV.

les pays où les chrétiens commandent sont moins agréables à Dieu que les autres pays.

Si un israélite sert un chef des idolâtres, il pèche. Mais s'il sert un chef des chrétiens, il commet un péché énorme.

Chapitre IV, paragraphe II.

Le juif doit être persuadé que le chrétien est un animal sauvage et il doit le traiter en conséquence. Quant aux idolâtres, le juif ne doit leur faire ni bien ni mal. Mais il doit employer tous efforts pour détruire les chrétiens.

Si un israélite voit un chrétien sur le bord d'un précipice, il doit le pousser dedans jusqu'à ce que le chrétien soit au fond de 1'abime.

Les passages de ce Talmud concernant l'Islam sont encore plus hostiles que ceux-ci ne le sont au christianisme. Le gouvernement n'a pas voulu en laisser publier la traduction, pour ne pas augmenter l'exapération des musulmans.

Source des pages 5-10:

- rapport de Cochelet du 30 avril 1840 annexe de ce rapport, celui du consul de Damas, Ratti-Menton du 24 avril 1840 et ses annexes.

- Archives Affaires Etrangères, Alexandrie, vol.28, direction commerciale, n.184, fol.439-440.

- Correspondance du consul de Damas, nr.11, IDEM, vol.28, fol.444-448.

Annex: Report of Consul Ratti-Menton.

Annex: Consul Cochelet's Report.

The Report of Ratti-Menton, Consul in Damascus.

Mr. Consul General:

I was about to send you my message, number 10, when a document fell into to my hands, and I want to send it to you without delay. You may find this attached document, a translation of a message written by Mr. Laurin (The Austrian Consul General in Alexandria), which was sent to Mr. Merlato (the Austrian Consul in Damascus). I do not know if he had discussed the subject of this problem with you before he went to meet with the King's Viceroy, or specifically before he was recalled by the Austrian Ambassador to Paris, Mr. Appony. He did not discuss the problem with me. I conclude from this that Mr. Laurin behaved on this occasion as we expected, and was exactly in agreement with our conversations in Sicily.

The Austrian Consul complained, and he was certainly annoyed by the information he received from Mr. Merlato regarding my authoritarian action: against Mr. Isaac Picciotto and Mr. Ayrout. The latter was responsible for studies and negotiations on behalf of the Austrians. Mr. Picciotto, is an Arab, who had worked as a clerk in the service of Ibrahim Pasha, until the Chief Commander, dismissed him for his bad behavior. There are two sides to the story. Mr. Picciotto never was the occupant of the house where I conducted my investigations. I stated this in my report to the Austrian Consul. The house belongs to the Farhi's Family. Picciotto, came to the house as a visitor and occupied an room as a guest. Then he, Mr. Picciotto, left.

Would my actions be considered as authoritarian or dictatorial simply because I entered a house owed by the Farhi's Family, while possessing signed permission to do so, by the local authority in order to search the house. I was accompanied by the police.

It was impossible for me not to offend Mr. Picciotto. There were many incidents which I ignored in the past in regard to Mr. Picciotto's behavior. And since we are dealing with the case of Father Thomas, and on principles only, it is worthwhile to mention the following incident.

On one evening, at Mr. Beaudin's, Mr. Picciotto met with some Syrian native Christians, in addition to the Consul of England, Father Eustet of the Lazarist Order, and a French Pharmacist, named Mr. Santi, working at the Hospital of Damascus. In the meeting problems of the day were being discussed and Mr. Santi appeared harsh in his speech with Mr. Picciotto. He spoke in a loud and prejudiced emotional manner. He threatened to take actions against the Jews. At the scene, in which I am being accused of being weak, I led Mr. Santi out and put him in the

Consulate's jail. After one day I released him solely on humanitarian considerations due to the fact, that he was the sole provider for his family. But, I did not set him free until he promised not to take illegal or lawless action.

On February 10th, I assigned a French employee to follow the investigations, with the approval of the Austrian Consul, and with the help of his advisor who was a Greek Jew. It was decided to search some homes which were under the care and protection of Austria and Toskana. At that time, Mr. Picciotto came to me and requested that his house not be included in the search. His reason for his request, he claimed was that such a search would be harmful, in the eyes of the people, thus no one visited his house.

In this I made a mistake and I admit it. I did not apply to him the same procedures used against the assassins before talking the Judicial report in this case. The review of the chronology events, as I have written them here, and as I stated them in my message to Mr. Merlato too, came as a true expression in response to what Mr. Picciotto has stirred up by his fanaticism without reason; and as a result to his threats in the name of the Consulate, also in the name of the Austrian Government, and his bragging about his ancestors being surrounded by a halo of pomp and greatness. Given this origin I request that the Consul General take note of it in Mr. Lurain's Message.

I learned from trusted sources that the uncle of the Austrian Consul General, in Alepa, Mr. Eliaou Picciotto, has objected to the Chief Commander, Ibrahim Pasha, and he has behaved thoughtlessly on behalf of his nephew's case, and that this is not in agreement with his Consular status, nor the consideration surrounding his name. Does Mr. Eliaou Picciotto want to take the individual virtue of his name and stamp it as a family virtue? Does he want the crime to lose its individual criminality? What does it mean to claim to insert anyone's name and to put it on the scale of justice? Does Mr. Eliaou Piccioto have a similar excuse to throw in front of the Tuscana's Tribunal, which has passed its judgment in the case of the ships of Livourne, because of the captain's murder, when the killers were his nephew and his uncle, who were at his heels here? And, did not his brother find himself forced to run away from Alexandria because of his theft and cheating scandal? Was not he forced to escape recently to Constantinople, because of his pursuit in committing acts of theft? Is it because all of these acts are legal and legitimate acts, that Mr. Eliaou Picciotto wants the family to be respected, and to recognize its virtuous character; or is it to their shame and their decaying bones? I concluded from this last analysis that the evils of the latter one (Mr. Eliaou Picciotto) represent shame. Now I shall return to Mr. Laurain's message.

First of all, I shall begin with the description of the measures taken against the Jews in general, as unjust and harsh measures. According to the contents of the message as described, it should be subject for special discussion. His Excellency, the Ambassador does not know me very well, while Mr. Laurzin knows me well. This accusation has been made against me. May I ask what are these so called unjust actions and procedures for which I am accused? Are they due to the search of the suspect's homes. Such searches are everyday occurrences worldwide. They take place through the legal process and by legal authority and are not

considered to be harsh or unjust or were they the precautious arrests of the suspected witnesses? Here too this normal procedure. In criminal cases or in the case of plots, representatives of the King of France work with representative everywhere in issuing arrest memos. When found not guilty freedom will be restored to the innocent, and no direct results will follow. Are these harsh or unjust measures?

The intentional use of this word contains veiled and unlimited meanings in describing what I did. As to the description of strong measures, I will not hesitate to use this word with those who are directing their accusations towards me in a deceitful manner. If I did not support the use of force, I would not have intervened firmly with the Muslim and Christian residents, had I not taken such action, most likely there would not be a Jew alive in Damascus today. There are thousands of witnesses able to give their testimonies which will confirm the truth of my actions, who will also say that I have worked day and night during the past days, together with the Consulate guards and government patrols cruising the Jewish Quarter, in order to prevent the Muslims and Christians from using force against innocent people who have no relation to the true criminals. The Governor, Sharif Pasha, arrested some boys, in order to pressure their families into admitting their role in the crime. These boys were set free and returned to their families in response to my request.

Is it not true that I was the one who restored to Mr. Schade Stambouli his freedom? He is a brother to one of the assassins. What were the results of this? He benefited from the freedom given to him, and worked with a renounced German Jew, by the name of Mr. Peretz, in planning new plots. Also, I was the one who spent the last three weeks working in conducting verbal discussions, and sending written messages to the Governor General in Damascus in order to release Mr. Moussa Farhi, a father of another accused person, after it became known that he was not arrested until it was established that he took part in the crime.

I also add that I tried my best to open the prison doors for Mallen Raphael, one of the first participants of the crime. His son confessed, without pressure and without any bad treatment, his part in the crime. Mr. Beaudin came to visit him in his prison, and found that the room of his imprisonment was not suitable, and requested that he be transferred to a better room. I complied with his request. Were all of these actions unjust and harsh? If this were so, I would admit that I am guilty of injustice. One other word on this subject. The investigators declared on February 29 that they informed the guilty ones they had completed the unveiling of all aspects of the case of Father Thomas and the surrounding circumstances. Sherif Pasha, told me through Mr. Beaudin that the verdict had been announced against the guilty party, but that it was possible to delay the execution until the arrival of the order from the Chief Commander, Ibrahim Pasha, if I agreed to that. I agreed to the delay. If I were as unjust as I am being accused of, none of the guilty would be alive today.

However, it remains necessary to deal with the problem in the light of the claims they have circulated about the envy over the riches and the wealth of the Jews. Do I envy them? Mr. Laurin did not say that frankly. But the content of his message as a whole, points to an accusation of this type, which I find imperative to respond to. If Mr.

Laurin searched for the true information, he would have learned that the Jews of Damascus revealed that they were ready to pay all of the gold they possessed to settle the case of Father Thomas. They knew that they were responsible, during many years in the past for the disappearance of a number of individuals of other religions. You can see from this, Consul, General, Sir, that this problem for them is related to a central important problem. The intervention of the French Consul in the investigation of today's case lifts the veil from previous crimes which have already been forgotten. The conviction of some individuals is a matter of no great importance. But the basic foundation is that in order to reach such a conclusion, it is absolutely necessary to wade through some of the verses of their sacred book, The Torah, which explains many of their religious practices; and herein all the problems reside.

It is embarrassing to me that I have been forced to enter into such details, in order to reply to the accusation directed at me. But I cannot refrain from stating that there are honest men able to declare their testimonies for me. If there were great sums of money paid to persons holding secondary positions following up this case and if I were able to benefit from this opportunity to satisfy their claim, that I envy their wealth, I would have taken their bribes to the limit. In fact, Mr. Consul General, Sir, Mr. Beaudin received gifts among which were two diamond flowers, with two Kashmere shawls. He was offered the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand piasters to destroy the documents and arguments in the murder case. You already know what the reply of this employee was. Is it worth noting that Mr. Chubli worked to assist me voluntary and without charge for writing all of the memoranda in Arabic at the time when Mr. Beaudin was busy assisting me with research and investigation. Eliahou Nahmed made an offer to Mr. Chubli, in the presence of Dr. Salina who enjoys English protection, that would guarantee him a bag containing one thousand pieces of gold to be used in the interest of the Jewish case. This offer was repeated twice, and the offer was turned down on both occasions.

I repeat my saying that if the King's Consul had wanted to use this case to obtain wealth, it was possible for him to do that, he and those who work with him could have obtained a huge supply of the magnificent treasures of the Jews.

But no! Here I speak to whatever conscience remains for those who are directing their accusations at me, because the idea of accepting bribery did not cross my mind. From the beginning I worked at taking precautions against bribery attempts. It is my honor to a request of His Excellency, the Viceroy, that he issue a disciplinary code for civil employees here in Damascus. And from the beginning when a group of notable Jews came to visit me, there were among them a large number from those who called for an investigation, so I said to them, "I ask of you to help me, and the Jews will receive my help." I warned them to avoid deception and not to turn the case into a religious case. At that time no one had yet been arrested with the exception of the Barber. I told them that money would not influence my firmness and strong determination to pursue the case to its end. The Jews did not believe that. It appears that their failure to use money here did not stop them from using it in other places.

I find myself compelled, Mr. Consul General Sir, to go through all these details because of the numerous accusations which Mr. Laurin has placed on my shoulders. This accusation is centered on two clear points, as stated:

1. Harsh and unjust measures against the Austrian's position.

2. Harsh and unjust measures against the Jews of Damascus.

And as to the third accusation which was "envy", and subsequently "the desire to undress and deprive the Jews," this is not clear yet, because the formulation of it is not completed, and cannot be formed until research and investigations are completed.

While I am waiting for this research and investigation, I beg you, Mr. Consul General Sir, to show your generosity in using all of your credit with His Excellency, the Foreign Minister, for the department to conduct a minute research into the questionable aspects of my action and behavior in the double assassination case in which Father Thomas and his servant were the victims. As proof of my honorable record, my seventeen years of service in the Ministry of the King's Government, is a testimony of my honesty and integrity. My record will speak for itself and false accusations cannot refute these records of my actions.

I am waiting for the information contained in Mr. Laurin's message, which Mr. Merlato had announced and declared in Jewish Quarters in an artificial manner. I refrain from describing it, although it stated that it would not be the Jews alone who would attack the Christians, but that the Jews are planning, and have obtained pledges of strong support, to mistreat the Algerians because they are French subjects. You will be satisfied when you see the attached complaint which was carried to me yesterday by an employee of the King.

Faithfully

P.S. I have received your newly dispatched message. I am sending all that I have been able to complete from the huge investigation report to the Ministry. I am honored to send the remainder of the first part, which I sent yesterday by mail, due to the lack of time at my disposal to re-copy this part of the report. Mr. Consul General Sir, if you think it necessary that the Minister should see it, I beg you to send a copy of it.

Annex: A Translated copy of the message which was written in Arabic, and was sent from Damascus to Beirut by an employee of the Austrian Consulate.

Yesterday, Mr. Merlato, received a message from Mr. Laurin, sent from Alexandria by official mail. It contains the following:

I received your message with the newspaper, and learned of the harsh and unjust measures against Isaac Picciotto, and the entry of the

French Consul with the soldiers from Mr. Joseph Ayrouth, the Austrian negotiator. I transmitted this immediately to the Viceroy, and explained to him all that has happened, as I understand it from what His Excellency said, which was that he believed that the Jews of Damascus were victims of the envy of others because of their wealth and riches. And I believe I am able to confirm that the Viceroy personally will follow the case in Alexandria. He is preparing to send his order to Sharif Pash to stop torturing the Jews, and mistreating them. I have written to the Austrian Ambassador in Paris and requested of him that he meet with the King, in order to submit to him an official memorandum about the harsh and unjust measures by the French Consul in Damascus against the Jews; especially those taken against Picciotto and Ayrouth. Hold fast to your stand. I will provide you with the available support, and with all means Austria can provide. You have done well when you refused to believe this case against the Jews, because their wealth and riches brought envy and hatred against them.

When this message arrived here, Mr. Merlato worked to spread the good news in the Jewish Quarter. However, it appears that the Head Quarter of the Governor General, did not receive anything regarding this matter. It is said that the Government did not receive any message. The information inside the French Consulate indicates that the Viceroy issued his order to follow the case of the Jews with strength and firmness. There is no hope among the Jews of good intentions to deny what was confirmed against them in the investigations and against what is contained in their religious books, which were translated for the Pasha, and which prove that the blood of whoever works on Saturday is lawful blood for the Jews.

Annex: It contains two translations to two passages from the Talmud among materials seized in Syria. These are passages concerning the Christians.

Chapter I.

The Christians and their Christian Churches say and do the opposite of truth. They contradict our (Jewish) truth. They are not different from the worshippers of the idols. The duty of the Jew is to work against these churches and the Christians.

The Bible of the Christian is nothing more than the doctrine of sin, declared clearly. The duty of the Jew is to burn the Bible anywhere it is found.

Chapter I, Paragraph IV.

The duty of the Jews is to curse the Christians three times everyday, and to pray to God to destroy them all, especially their kings and

their governments. This precept applies especially to their religious leaders; it is necessary to stir hatred against the Christians.

God gave the Jews the right to take possession of the Christian wealth by all possible ways and means, whether by trade, or by kindness and gentleness, or by cheating and deception, even by theft.

Chapter II, Paragraph IV.

God loves the countries which are not governed by the Christians more than countries under the rule of the Christians. The Jew will commit a sin if he serves any person from the worshipers of idols, but he commits an even greater crime if he works in the service of a Christian master.

Chapter IV, Paragraph II.

A Jew must be convinced that the Christian is a savage animal, and he must treat him as such. The Jews must not do good or evil with an idolater, but must use all efforts to destroy the Christians.

If a Jew saw a Christian on the edge of a very deep abyss (pit), he must push him, until the Christian reaches the bottom of the abyss (pit).

The Talmud passages regarding Islam are similar. Islam is more hostile to the Jews than Christianity. But the Government refrained from publishing the translation in order not to increase the stirring of the Muslims.

Sources pp. 5-10

Cochelet's Report, April 30, 1840.

Ratti-Menton's Report, April 24, 1840.

- Archives, Foreign Ministry, Alexandria, Vol. 28. Department of Commerce No. 184 pp. 439-440.

- Correspondence of Counsul of Damascus No. 11, Vol. 28, pp. 444-448.

Alexandrie, le 15 mai 1840

Cochelet au ministre Thiers.

Objet: enquête au sujet de l'assassinat du Père Thomas et correspondance entre les consuls généraux à Alexandrie à ce sujet.

Résumé de l'introduction: réception des instructions du 28 avril. Mission délicate à confier à Desmeloizes. Le consul Ratti-Menton a déjà désiré d'être l'objet d'une enquête sur sa conduite. Desmeloizes possède les qua-lités voulues, malgré sa jeunesse. Il l'a déjà présenté à Mohammed Ali qui a paru satisfait de l'initiative prise par le gouvernement...

«Quelques jours auparavant, le consul général d'Autriche avait cru devoir adresser aux consuls généraux des grandes Puissances la lettre et note, ci-jointes, qui incriminent implicitement la conduite du consul du roi à Damas. Je n'ai pas cru devoir les laisser sans réponse...

Il m'a paru qu'il n'appartenait pas à l'agent d'une puissance étrangère de se constituer le défenseur des meurtriers d'un religieux sous la protection française et que c'était au consul du Roi soit à l'autorité supérieure du pays à demander la révision de la procédure si elle devait avoir lieu. Car seul un but d'humanité peut justifier de telles démarches...

I1 y a dans cette affaire de Damas diverses circonstances sur lesquelles on n'aime pas à dire le fond de sa pensée quand on n'a pas vu les choses de prés et quand on n'a pas en mains toutes les pièces du procès. C'est pour-quoi, je ne rejeterai pas les bruits qui circulent...

Desmeloizes partira le 20 de ce mois sur le bateau-poste anglais qui se rend d'ici à Beyrouth...

Annexe: Lettre de Cochelet à son collègue autrichien Laurin, le 7 mai.

Je viens de recevoir la circulaire que vous avez cru devoir adresser aux consuls généraux des grandes Puissances à Alexandrie, ainsi que le projet de note que vous leur proposez de mettre sous les yeux du vice-roi.

Je regrette, quant à moi, de ne pouvoir donner suite à l'ouverture que vous me faites. Et je vais vous en donner les motifs que vous apprécierez sans doute, torque vous serez mieux informé des circonstances de l'affaire dont il s'agit.

Le Père Thomas, religieux de la mission française des capucins en Syrie desservant l'hospice français à Damas et son domestique, protégé français, ayant subitement dispru, Mr le comte de Ratti-Menton, consul de France à Damas, a dû en prévenir l'autorité locale qui a fait des recherches et a découvert des traces de leur assassinat.

Les auteurs présumés, étant des Rayas israélites de Damas, ont été arrêtés. Leur procès a été instruit par l'autorité locale. Une condamnation s'en est suivie, à l'exécution de laquelle le consul de france a cru devoir demander un sursis, afin de continuer les recherches relatives au meurtre du domestique.

Il s'agit donc d'une affaire, entre le consulat de France à Damas, partie plaignante, et l'autorité locale appelée à juger et à punir les rayas. Les consuls généraux d'Autriche, d'Angleterre, de Prusse et de Russie, ne pourraient intervenir en ceux-ci que dans un but d'humanité, afin d'empêcher l'emploi de moyens rigoureux qui malheureusement n'ont pas encore été retranchés de la législation musulmane. Or, Monsieur, je n'ai pas attendu l'intimation de personne pour prendre l'initiative à cet égard. Et, aussitôt que j'ai été informé du crime, j'ai écrit à Mr Ratti-Menton:

«Vous veillerez à ce que les poursuites et les arrestations qui auront lieu pour arriver à connaître la vérité soient faites avec les ménagements qui sont dans notre législation. Nous devons veiller à ce que la vérité se

découvre sans que l'on soit obligé d'employer des mesures qui répugnent à nos moteurs et qui ne sont plus de notre époque».

C'était la seule initiative que je pouvais prendre dans une affaire judiciaire et que j'ai prise aussitôt que le crime m'a été dénoncé.

Si la législation du pays permet aux condamnés d'appeler de la sentence prononcée contre eux ou si le consul de France à Damas provoque la révision de la procédure dans le cas où il aurait eu des motifs de soupçonner les juges de partialité, nous n'avons, ni vous ni nos collègues le droit de nous y opposer.

Quant à faire revoir cette procédure et à accorder aux condamnés le droit de choisir des défenseurs, son Altesse le vice-roi est libre de faire à cet égard ce que prescrit la législation musulmane. Et il n'a pas besoin du con-cours de MM les consuls généraux des grandes Puissances. Car ce n'est pas d'une affaire politique dont il s'agit, mais d'un assassinat dont la poursuite et le jugement appartiennent à l'autorité locale.

Quant à moi, Monsieur, après avoir fait tout ce qu'un sentiment d'humanité me prescrivait, je cherche à conserver la plus grande impartialité dans ce qui se rattache à un épouvantable assassinat dont la procédure, déjà passée sous mes yeux, a été transmise aujourd'hui au Département des affaires Etrangères qui appréciera toutes les circonstances du crime.

Je ne crois pas d'ailleurs pouvoir me constituer le défenseur de quelques rayas meurtriers d'un religieux franciscain sous la protection de la France, après toutes les offres énormes d'argent et de cadeaux faites à tous les employés du consulat de France à Damas, pour chercher à ébranler les convictions de Mr le comte Ratti-Menton et l'engager à retirer ses plaintes.

Je déplore plus que personne la publicité qui a été donnée à l'affaire de Damas et les révélations auxquelles elle a donné lieu. Ce n'est pas à l'époque où nous vivons que l'on rendra responsables, des interprétations criminelles que des rabbins, ignorants et fanatiques, vivant au milieu de peuples exaltés pour leurs religions respectives, ont pu faire des Ecritures, une nation qui jouit depuis longtemps de l'émancipation la plus large et qui est admise en France et en Angleterre à 1'excercie de droits civils et politiques.

II ne dépend plus malheureusement de personne d'empêcher la controverse qui s'établira sur les causes qui ont donné lieu à l'assassinat. Il est à désirer maintenant que la vérité se fasse jour, d'après ce qui sera sans doute publié sur la procédure régulière.

J'ai l'honneur de vous renvoyer la circulaire adressée à nos collègues et la note qui y est jointe, en vous priant de mettre sous leurs yeux la réponse que j'ai cru devoir vous faire.

Recevez, Monsieur...

Annexe deux: Note des consuls généraux: projet de lettre proposé par le consul général d'Autriche, Mr Laurin.

C'est avec la plus grande satifaction que les consuls généraux d'Autriche, de France, de la Grande Bretagne, de Prusse et de Russi, viennent d'apprendre qu'en conformité des ordres que, mû par des sentiments d'humanité et de justice, Son Altesse le vice-roi d'Egypte avait daigné transmettre à Damas, on y a suspendu immédiatement la procédure pénible et la torture employée d'abord pour tirer des aveux aux juifs accusés de l'assassinat du Père Thomas et de son domestique.

Animée sans doute des vues éclairées qui, depuis des siècles, ont fair abolir en Europe la poursuite dés juifs accusés de sacrifices humains, Sor Altesse le vice-roi a daigné exprimer itérativement aux soussignés sa

sollicitude de soumettre cette affaire à une investigation scrupuleuse et impartiale, en ajoutant qu'elle accueillerait avec plaisir toute proposition offerte dans l'intérêt de l'humanité et tendant à ce but.

Fondés sur ces propositions bienveillantes, les soussignés ont l'hon. neur de soumettre au jugement éclairé de Son Altesse l'opinion que rien ne saurait peut-être mieux assurer la découverte de la vérité et garantir en même temps les accusés de toute injusice que si Son Altesse voulait per-mettre à ces derniers, ainsi que cela se pratique en Europe, de choisir eux-mêmes ou de faire désigner par leurs coreligionnaires un ou plusieurs avocats chargés d'assister aux interrogations, de prendre leur défense et autorisés à requérir tous les éclaircissements qui leur paraissent nécessaires à une nouvelle instruction régulière et complète du procès.

On proviendrait probablement de cette manière à mettre au jour bien des faits et des circonstances restés dans l'obscurité jusqu'à présent, et propres à porter la conviction dans l'esprit des juges impartiaux et intègres que Son Altesse daignera charger de prononcer sur cette affaire.

Les soussignés...

A.Laurin

pour copie conforme. Cochelet

Annexe trois: Note du consul général d'Autriche, A.Laurin, ad circulandum.

MM et chers collègues,

Son Altesse le vice-roi, m'ayant réitéré, il y a quelques jours, l'offre déjà faite à Mr le comt de Médem, qu'elle recevrait avec plaisir des propositions de la part des consuls généraux des grandes Puissances, par rapport à la marche à suivre dans le procès des juifs de Damas accusés de l'assassinat du Père Thomas et de son domestique, j'ai ébauché le projet d'une note collective à mettre au vice-roi et que j'ai l'honneur de vous soumettre ci-joint.

Je serais charmé, si vous vouliez vous associer à une pareille démarche et d'apprendre sans réserve le jugement que vous en portez, ainsi que les modifications que vous pourriez trouver convenables d'y apposer en marge.

Veuillez bien, après cela passer ces pièces à MM. vos collègues marqués ci-contre.

Agréez...

La note fut souscrite par 8 consuls. 8 autres consuls ont refusé la signature. Ceux qui y ont souscrit sont: le consul général d'Autriche, celui de Danemark, celui d'Espagne, celui des Etats-Unis d'Amérique, celui de Russie, celui de Prusse et les deux consuls, général et local de Grande-Bretagne. Ceux qui ont refusé la signature sont: le consul général de France, celui des Pays-Bas, celui de Grèce, celui de Naples, celui de Toscane, celui de Sardaigne, et les deux consuls général et local de Belgique.

Source: Pour le rapport de Cochelet et pour les trois annexes.

Archives Affaires Etrangères.

Consulat d'Alexandrie, direction commerciale, vol.nr.189, fol.466-473.

Alexandria, May 15th, 1840

From: Cochelet.

To: Minister Thiers.

Subject: The Investigation on the subject of the Assassination of Father Thomas, and
correspondence with the Consul General in Alexandria on this subject.

Introduction resume: Receiving of instructions, April 28, 1840. The delicate mission of Desmeloizes. Consul Ratti-Menton desires for the conduct of investigation of his behavior and actions. Mr. Desmeloizes possesses the qualifications required for success in his task, in spite of his young age. He presented himself to Mohamad Ali, who has expressed his satisfaction with the initiative taken by the Government.

The General Consul of Austria believed, some times earlier, that it was its duty to send messages and notes to the Consuls of the Great States, containing inappropriate, incriminating information, and is not pleased with the behavior of the Consul for the King of France in Damascus, and I find it to be my duty not to ignore this message.

It appears to me that it is not the jurisdiction of an employee of a Great Foreign Government to appoint himself as defender of the murderers of a clergyman protected by the French Government, and for this employee to request either from the Consul of the French King or from the high authorities of the country to hold new investigation in the case, even if there existed a necessity for that and there remains the humanitarian goal.

The Damascus case was surrounded by a host of different circumstances. It is not advisable to discuss the basic ideas, especially when they cannot be studied closely and when all investigation records are not available. This was the reason which forced me to direct my attention to the noisy reaction that was created because of it.

Mr. Desmeloizes departed on the twentieth of this month aboard the English postal boat to Beirut.

Annex: Mr. Cochelet letter to his Austrian colleague, Mr. Laurin; May 7th.

I received at this moment, the circular which I wanted to send to all the Consul Generals of the Great States in Alexandria; and also a memorandum project which I wanted to present to the Viceroy.

As for myself, I am sorry because I was not able to share or exchange with you your declared openness; and I present to you the proofs and causes which will surely be appreciated when better information regarding the case becomes available to you.

Father Thomas is a clergyman from the French Mission to the Capuins in Damascus. He served the French Church in Damascus. He and his servant who enjoyed French protection; both suddenly disappeared.

Therefore, it was imperative upon the French Counsel in Damascus, Mr. Comte de Ratti-Menton, to inform the local authorities, who took proper action with its search and investigations to uncover the murderers.

Suspicion centered around some Jews from Damascus. They were arrested, and the local authorities started the investigation. Then it issued the death sentence for some of them. The French Consul thought that the execution must be delayed until the completion of the investigation of the slaying of Father Thomas' servant.

Therefore, the case is the concern of the French Consul in Damascus as a plaintiff, and the local authority who assumed the responsibility for the investigation and sentenced the murderers. It is not possible for the General Consuls of Austria, England, Prussia, and Russia to intervene on behalf of the murderers, except in the frame of a humanitarian cause that does not exceed the prevention of using force or violence. Unfortunately, they were not able, until now, to separate it from Islamic Law. Therefore, Mr. Consul, I do not expect anyone to come forward and take the initiative on this subject. I have written to Mr. Ratti-Menton when I learned of the crime what follows:

"Make sure that the investigations and arrests, which would follow, for the purpose of finding the truth, are in full agreement with our laws and legislation. We must be on guard to uncover the truth without resort to measures that are against our traditions and do not fit our age."

This initial act was the only measure I was able to take in a judicial/legal sense. I took this measure immediately after I learned about the crime.

If the law in the country allows for the sentenced person to plead for mercy, and if it was possible for the French Consul in Damascus to ask for reconsideration of these measures and the investigation, relying on the doubt of the rulers and judges, it is beyond our ability, you and I, as well as our consuls, to have any right to oppose such measures. When these measures and investigations are reconsidered, and the sentenced persons are given the right to choose their defenders, then His Excellency the Viceroy will be free to act about this case in accordance with what is required by the Islamic Law. Then, he does not need the help of their Excellencies, the Consuls of the Great

Countries. Because, this case is not a political case, it is a criminal case within the jurisdiction of the local authorities.

As for myself, Sir, after I did all that my humanitarian feelings dictated to me, I maintained the highest possible measures of justice and neutrality in all matters connected with a horrible murder case. I reviewed all of its stages and measures. And I forwarded to the Foreign Ministry for his examination all aspects of the crime.

I do not believe that I could appoint myself as a defender of some murderous Jews who slew a French clergyman, protected by France. And after they presented huge monetary gifts, and valuable presents to all the French Consulate employees in Damascus, to shake the confidence of Mr. Ratti-Menton, and force him to withdraw his protests and complaints. I feel sad, more so than any human being can know because of the propaganda which has centered on the Damascus case, and for what has been discovered of it. The age which we live in, does not allow us to place the responsibility on criminal interpretations presented by ignorant and fanatic Rabbis living in the midst of people whose greatness is based on their religion. It is possible that their writings should have focused on the nation which had practiced their roles a long time ago, and who have achieved large amounts of freedom, both civil and political rights acknowledged by France and England.

Unfortunately, the case is not that of a person working to stop religious arguments regarding the causes which were brought into to the open by the murder crime. What is required now, is that the truth must be exposed as clear as the sun, in accordance with what will certainly be declared, and announced about the orderly investigations and inquiries.

I am honored to send to you the circular addressed to our colleagues, and the attached note. It is my hope that you may show them the response which I thought that you would, in turn, be yours.

Pleases notify of receiving, Sir.

Annex two: Note to the Consul Generals: Project of a letter proposed by the Austrian Consul General, Mr. Laurin.

With the greatest feeling of satisfaction and conviction the General consuls of Austria, France, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia, were notified that in accordance to the directives, which came as the fruit of human compassion, and justice, the Viceroy of Egypt issued his orders to Damascus, to immediately stop the harsh measures and torture used previously to extract confessions from the Jews who were accused of the assassination of Father Thomas and his servant.

Centuries have past since the days in which Europe abolished the pursuance of Jews accused of human sacrificial acts. The abolition was based on enlightened minds and impartial investigations. His Highness, the Viceroy deemed it appropriate to express, repeatedly, his understanding with the undersigned persons to place this case under a

critical and conclusive study, adding that he would be pleased to receive any suggestions presented for the welfare of humanity, or to the attainment of this purpose.

In response to this kind of overture, the undersigned persons have the honor to suggest the submission of the clear order, issued by his Highness, an idea second to none, to guarantee the discovery of the truth, which is to allow those accused, to choose for themselves, or those chosen by their religious brethren, a lawyer, or a number of lawyers, whose task it will be to assist the investigators in defending the accused, obtain all necessary clarifications which might be needed to execute the new directives in an orderly manner, and the completion of the investigations. This is in line with what is practiced in Europe. In this way, it may be possible to reach the explanation of the events and the circumstances which are still unknown, even now. This is especially necessary in order to formulate convincing thinking for the judges of honorable and ethical reputation, whom your Highness allocates to this case.

Signatures

A. Laurin

An exact copy. Cochelet

Annex Three: Austrian General Consul A. Laurin note for circulation.

Dear My Collegues,

The Viceroy returned to me, some days earlier, the request which was presented by Mr. Comte Medem, stating that His Highness gladly received the suggestions of the Genera Consuls of to Great Countries regarding what is to be done in the questioning of the Jews of Damascus, who are accused of the assassination of Father Thomas and his servant. I formulated the project of a collective note to be presented to the Viceroy. I have the honor to place this project in your hands.

I will be pleased if you will participate with me, in a joint move, and will accept your decision, and whatever amendments you might consider to be suitable, without any reservations. Please place your signatures. And I hope that you carry the project to your colleagues whose names are listed in the project note.

Faithfully

The project was signed by eight consuls, and was refused by eight others.

The General Consuls who signed it were: Austria Denmark, Spain, United States of America, Russia, Prussia, General and Local British Consuls.

The Consuls who refused to sign: French General Consul, General Consul of the Netherlands, General Consul of Greece, General Consul of Napoli, General Consul of Tuscania, General Consul of Sardinia, and the General and Local Consuls of Belgium.

Source: Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Consulate of Alexandria, Directory of Commerce, Vol. 184, pp. 466-473.

Alexandrie, le 23 mai 1840

Cochelet au ministre Thiers.

Objet: La note du consul autrichien Laurin et la réaction du consul sarde.

Considérations sur son propre comportement.

Résumé de l'introduction et principaux passages du rapport:

Desmeloizes est parti la veille pour Damas pour l'enquête. De même, la veille, le consul autrichien a fait circuler sa note parmi le corps consulaire. Sur 16 consuls, 8 ont refusé leur signature. La raison donnée était normale: L'affaire de l'assassinat à Damas concerne uniquement le consul de France. Cependant le consul général de Sardaigne, Cerruti, a réagi violemment contre cette note. Aussi, a-t-il envoyé à Cochelet une note de protestation. Il écrivait notamment que le Père Thomas était né dans le royaume de Sardaigne, bien que par sa fonction, il était un protégé français. Or il n'y a pas un consul sarde à Damas. Cochelet ajoutait:

«La note du consul d'Autriche singnée par quelques consuls a été déjà remise au vice-roi. Mais celui-ci sait à quoi s'en tenir sur les motifs de cette démarche. Il distingue entre l'assassinat et ses motifs. D'ailleurs le ministre doit être déjà en possession des actes du procès... Si on consentait à une révision sous la présidence d'avocats européens, ils annuleront et la procédure et ses motifs, en achetant les juges».

Cochelet défendait alors la procédure faite. D'ailleurs les juifs de Damas ont avoué, même interrogés séparément. La confirmation de l'assassinat est déjà faite. Car:

«On a retrouvé les os, la chair et la calotte du Père Thomas... Il y a aussi les certificats des médecins et même le langage du consul d'Autriche à Damas».

On a fait circuler des bruits injustes contre Ratti-Menton. En tout état de cause, il faut attendre le rapport de l'enquête confiée à Desmeloizes.

Annexe: La lettre du consul de Sardaigne et la réponse de Cochelet.

Alexandria, May 23, 1840

From: Cochelet.

To: Minister Thiers.

Subject: The Austrian Consul, Laurin, Note and the reaction of the Consul of Sardiia to the Austrian Consul's behavior.

Resume of the note, with certain passages of it.

Mr. Desmeloizes departed, neading towards Damascus to conduct the investigation. On that same day the Austrian Counsul circulated his project not among the members of the Consular Corput Eight out of the sixteen consuls refused to sign the note. The reason for their refusal was natural: that the case of the assassination which took place in Damascus, is a case which concerns the French Consul alone. The Consul of Sardinia, Mr. Cerruti, unilaterally, reacted strongly over this note. He also sent a protest note to Mr. Cochelet.

He pointed out in his note that Father Thomas was born in Sardinia, in addition to the fact that he was a subject of France, because of his profession. Also, Sardinia has a Consul in Damascus. The French Consul, Mr. Cochelet added:

"I submitted the note of the Austrian Consul, which was signed by some other consuls, to the Viceroy. But he knows the hidden reasons behind the note, and he can distinguish between the assassination crime and its causes.

The Minister now has the minutes of the investigations and the trial procedures. If he gives permission to review these minutes under the direction of European lawyers, they will work to abolish these measures, their proof and the causes through the purchase of Judges and tribunals."

So, Cochelet is defending the investigation procedures of the case. The Jews of Damascus have confessed. Each one of them was questioned individually, and the crime was confirmed by the facts with the discovery of:

A - Bones, flesh, and the head dress of Father Thomas,

B - The medical testimonies of the committee of Physicians, and

C - The statements of the Austrian Consul in Damascas.

An unjustified cry was directed against Ratti-Menton. Anyhow, there was no alternative but to wait for the investigation report to be reviewed personally by Desmeloizes.

Annex: The letter of the Consul of Sardinia, and Cochelet response.

Paris, le 27 juin

Réponse du ministre Thiers à Cochelet

Résumé de l'introduction: Approbation pour le comportement de Cochelet qui ne s'est pas associé à l'initiative de son collègue autrichien. Le ministre comprenait les difficultés de la tâche du consul, notamment à cause des désordres de la situation politique et et militaire en Syrie. Et le ministre continuait par ces lignes:

«... dans cette affaire de cette nature, le rôle imposé aux agents de S.M. le Roi, et dans lequel je crains que Mr Ratti-Menton ne se soit pas assez complètement renfermé, était de découvrir le fait à l'autorité locale, de provoquer la recherche des coupables et de s'en rapporter du reste à la justice territoriale seule compétente pour procéder et prouver.

Au point où on en est aujourd'hui, c'est encore au gouvernement égyptien de décider d'après sa prope conviction, s'il y a lieu de réviser le procès. Mais, en renonçant à exercer aucune espèce d'influence sur la détermination du vice-roi, dans cette circonstance, vous êtes fondé à exiger que votre exemple soit suivi par les autres agents des autres puissances, et qu'un libre cours soit laissé à la justice du pays. Le vice-roi comprendra de lui-même qu'admettre le ministère d'avocats européens dans un tribunal musulman, comme les signataires de la note remise à ce prince semblent le demander, serait jeter dans l'esprit des juges inexpérimentés une perturbation nuisible à la manifestation de la vérité et à l'équité de la sentence.

Si donc l'affaire doit subir une révision qui semble devenir nécessaire, vous vous bornerez à faire sentir au vice-roi combien il importe qu'elle soit soumise à des juges dont la position et le caractère garantissent l'impartialité, et que des normes efficaces et libres de toute influence étrangère soient prises pour assurer et constater l'exacte observation de la loi.

«Quant au mode de procéder, les nobles sentiments de Mohammed Ali m'assurent que vous n'aurez pas à renouveler les protestations que vous vous êtes empressé de faire dès l'origine du procès contre l'emploi de traitements cruels qu'une coutume barbare a fait infliger aux prévenus à Damas et qu'une population innocente sera désormais préservée des persécutions dont cette déplorable affaire a été le prétexte...».

Le 19 juin, le ministre Thiers avait déjà écrit à Cochelet, approuvant sa réponse faite à la note de son collègue autrichien Laurin. Il l'informait aussi d'avoir reçu les documents envoyés par la consul à Damas, Ratti-

Menton. Mais comme ces documents n'avaient pas dissipé complètement «l'obscurité dans son esprit», le ministre attendait donc pour se fixer le rapport demandé à l'enquêteur, Desmeloizes.

Le 6 août 1840, Cocbelet écrivait au ministre Thiers au sujet de l'affaire des juifs de Damas et du rapport de Desmeloizes:

Monsieur le ministre,

Je m'empresse d'avoir l'honneur de vous transmettre le rapport qui vous est adressé par Mr Desmeloizes sur l'ensemble de l'affaire des Damas, que je reçois à l'instant par le poste du gouvernement.

Je suis trop pressé, dans ce moment par le départ du paquebot pour ajouter de longues observations à ce rapport. Je n'ai pas d'ailleurs sous les yeux les piècs qui vous ont été envoyées directement par Mr Desmeloizes. J'attends donc le retour de cet agent pour me former une opinion plus précise de tous les faits.

En attendant, je suis heureux de lire dans le rapport que l'information qui vous a été adressée:

«est insuffisante pour repousser implicitement et explicitement les imputations d'après lesquelles le consulat de France à Damas a été dépeint comme l'auteur des manoeuvres odieuses, que Mr Ratti-Menton s'est tenu à l'écart, qu'il s'est abstenu de tout encouragement, qu'il a protesté deux fois par son départ précipité de sa vive répugnance pour des violences que la loi musulmane n'a pas encore abolies».

Vous n'avez donc pas à rétracter, Mr le ministre, les généreuses paroles que vous avez prononcées en faveur de Mr Ratti-Menton dans les deux Chambres. Et je me félicite moi-même de ne m'être pas trompé sur son caractère et sa conduite, lorsque je me suis, en quelque sorte, porté garant de l'un et de l'autre.

On lui reprochera toujours sans doute de n'avoir pas cherché à empêcher les tortures. Peut-être, aurait-il dû indique; à l'autorité locale, comme je le lui écrivais le 10 mars, un moyen de procédure en rapport avec nos formes et usages. Mais un consul de France, poursuivant un crime commis sur un de ses protégés, pouvait-il faire changer immédiatement la législation musulmane? C'était surtout aux consuls qui s'étaient déclarés les pro-

tecteurs des juifs à faire des protestations énergiques. Loin de là, la lettre du 21 janvier de Mr Merlato, consul d'Autriche, qui est annexé au rapport de Mr Desmeloizes, encourage le gouverneur général à faire arrêter les juifs protégés autrichiens et toscans, lorsque, d'après la juridiction de l'Orient c'était à lui à instruire le procès.

Espérons, Mr le ministre, que la malheureuse affaire qui a eu un si grand retentissement, engagera tous les gouvernements à s'entendre dans un but louable pour faire réformer une législation barbare».

Source:

Archives Affaires Etrangères. Alexandrie, direction commerciale, vol.28. Lettre de Cochelet è Thiers du 23 mai, nr.192, fol.480-483.

Réponses du ministre Thiers du 19 juin, nr.fol.492, et du 27 jas, r.71, fol.495-496.

Rapport de Cochelet au ministre Thiers, du 6 août, nr.202, fol.508-509.

Paris, June 27th

Response of the Minister Thiers to Cochelet:

A Brief Introduction: Approval and appreciation of the behaviour of Cochelet who did not share his Austrian colleague his initiative. The Minister realized the duty difficulties which the consul undertook, because of the disturbance of the political and military situation in Syria. The Minister introduced his opinion as follows:

«In such a case of this nature, the duty of the men of his Majesty the King — the duty which I am afraid that Mr. Ratti-Menton did not comprehend sufficiently — is limited to reveal the facts of the case to the local authorities, and hastening the search for the criminals, and afterwards leaving the case to the regional justice which is capable of disposal and verification». According to the present situation, the Egyptian Government is the authority which takes decision to re-examine inquest and carry out trial according to her satisfaction if she finds it necessary. But, on the light of her abstention to exercise any sort of pressure on the Governor in taking his decision, you lean upon your attitude to ask the rest of the officials of the Supper Powers to take similar attitudes. And leaving freedom to tribunal in the country to do its duty. At the same time, the governor realizes that the claim of the Ministry to send European lawyers to plead in Islamic court, in accordance with the memorandum which was signed by some consuls and delivered to the Prince, will leave a bad impression on the judges, and that will be harmful to truth and to soundness of jurisdiction.

In this manner, if it is inevitable to re-examine the case, which seems to be necessary, you have to notify the governor that it will be an important matter to hand in the case to judge who have the justice, in addition to the high efficiency and full freedom bound to eliminate any external factors and that conduce to accurate implementation of law.

But in regard to the methods of interrogation and investigation into the harsh procedures applied in the light of the tradition followed in Damascus, Mohammad Ali who showed me noble sympathy, assured that you needn't renew the protests which you hurriedly sent at the very beginning». He added that «henceforth there will be no need for grumble or complaint».

The Minister Thiers wrote a letter to the Consul Cochelet on the 19th of June and he agreed in it with the attitude of Cochelet in regard to the memorandum of his Austrian colleague, Loran. He informed him also that he received the documents which were sent by the Consul of Damascus – Ratti-Menton - but, because these documents did not reveal exactly the ambiguity in his idea about the subject - the Minister is waiting for obtaining the report which he had asked Desmeloizes to introduce it. Cochelet wrote a letter to the Minister Thiers on the sixth of August 1840, on the subject of the Jews' case in Damascus, and on the report of the investigator Desmeloizes.

Mr. Minister,...

I have the honour to deliver to you in haste the report which is directed to you by Mr. Desmeloizes about the total case of the Jews in Damascus. This report which I have just received by official post.

At this moment, I feel greatly distressed because of the departure of the post boat, so that I cannot add detailed explanation on this report. Now, there is nothing left but the folios of the report which Mr. Desmeloizes has sent you directly. And I am waiting for the return of this investigator in order to establish more accurate opinion on all facts and incidents. Meanwhile, I am glad to quote some excerpts from the report which is directed to you:

«Is the explicit or implicit disapproval shown enough to exonerate the Consul of France from the Charges attached to him? He was described as instigator of hateful and horrible manoeuvres, while Mr. Ratti-Menton isolated and protected himself from all encouragement, and introduced protest twice by going out in hurry to express strongly his disgust of violent manners which Islamic laws work to abolish and invalidate».

So you have no need, Mr. Minister, to withdraw your words which you have said generously on behalf of Mr. Ratti-Menton before the Cabinet and Parliament. I seize the opportunity to congratulate myself that I was not deceived by his qualities and behaviour, nor disappointed when I spoke favourably of him in a way or another.

They will always work to reproach him because he did not try to stop torture. He may have been bound to inform the competent authorities. In fact, I wrote him a letter on March 10th to the effect that investigation should go in a line similar to ours. Can the Consul of France, who is following up the minutes of a crime committed against some one under his protection, change the Islamic Legislation directly? Any how, that was the duty of the Consuls who claimed responsibility for the protection of the Jews, and who were required to introduce decisive protests. More than that, the letter of the Consul of Austria, Mr. Merlato, on the 21st of January which is attached to the letter of Desmeloizes, shows that Mr. Merlato has encouraged the General Governor to arrest the Jews whom his country — Austria — and Toscania protects. He is also the one who suggested to him that judicial proceedings should be on the basis of legislation applied in the East.

We hope, Mr. Minister, that this miserable case which caused great echoes, would be a motive to all governments for mutual understanding in order to agree on reforms on the barbarian legislations.

Source: Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Alexandria, Directory of Commerce, Vol. 28.

— A letter from Cochelet to Thiers on 23rd of May, No. 192, folio 480-481, Annex, folio 482-483.

— Response of the Minister Thiers on 19th June, folio 492, and letter on 27th of June, No. 71, folio 495-496.

— Report of Cochelet to the Minister Thiers on the 6th of August, No. 202, folio 508, 509.

Constantinople (Thérapia) le 27 mai 1840

L'ambassadeur Pontois ministre Thiers.

Objet: L'affaire du Père Thomas de Damas et l'initiative de la communauté israélite.

Monsieur le ministre,

Le retentissement qu'a eu en Europe l'affaire des juifs de Damas et la connaissance que viennent de me donner les jounaux des démarches faites auprès du gouvernement du roi, à l'effet de solliciter son intervention, m'engagent à aller au-devant des explications que Votre Excellence pourra être dans le cas de me demander à cet égard et à lui faire connaître, dès à présent, la part que l'ambassade de Sa Majesté a prise dans le drame lugubre et mystérieux dont l'attention publique est aujourd'hui si vivement préoccupée.

Cette part a été fort restreinte. Car je n'ai jusqu'à présent reçu aucune information de Mr le consul de France à Damas sur l'événement dont il s'agit. Il s'est borné à me dire incidemment, dans une lettre du 23 avril dernier, que tout son temps était absorbé par les soins à donner à l'instruction de la procédure relative à l'assassinat de deux protégés français.

Mais, ayant reçu de plusieurs juifs considérables de ce pays, agissant au nom de la communauté israélite de Damas la requête ci-jointe en copie (voir page 4 de ce dossier), je me suis empressé de la transmettre à Mr le comte de Ratti-Menton, ainsi qu'une réclamation sur le même sujet de Mr l'internonce (ambassadeur d'Autriche à Constantinople) en accompagnant ces deux pièces de la lette dont est également ci-jointe, je n'ai, comme de raison, point encore reçu de réponse.

L'on vient de m'apprendre que sur les instances du consul général d'Angleterre, le Pacha d'Egypte a donné ordre que l'on cessât de faire usage de la torture et que l'affaire fût instruite de nouveau d'une manière régulière et légale.

J'ai l'honneur...

Source: Archives Affaires Etrangères.

Turquie Ambassade de constantinople, direction politique. Volume 280, nr.38, fol.222-223.

Note: La réclamation de l'internonce d'Autriche ne se trouve pas dans ce volume.

Constantinople, May 27, 1840

From: Ambassador Pontois.

To: Minister Thiers.

Subject: The Affairs of Father Thomas in Damascus, and the initiative of the Jewish Community.

Mr. Minister Sir,

Due to the intensity of the news echo which prevails in Europe, because of the case of the Damascus Jews, and the news which I gathered from the press regarding the measures taken by the King's Government. The impact of its intervention urged me to request, whatever explanations available from you, so that I may be able to provide them here if it is requested of me. And also your instruction as to the role that ought to be adopted by His Majesty's Embassy regarding the obscure and strange stories which have engaged the interest of public opinion and polarized its attention.

The Embassy role remains very limited because I have not yet received any information from the French Consul in Damascus regarding the events. He provided me in a casual manner by his note of last April 23rd, that he was spending all his time following the procedures related to the assassination of two men who were French subjects. I received a number of notable Jews in this country. They claimed that they are working for the Jewish community in Damascus, and they presented a request of which I am enclosing a copy, (see page 4 of the file). I sent it immediately to Mr. Ratti-Menton, and also a request of the Austrian ambassador in Constantinople on the same subject. I am attaching two copies of the requests. But I did not receive a response.

I learned that the Pasha, the Governor of Egypt, had issued his order, in response to the relentless requests of the General Consul of England to halt the torturous measures, and to reconstruct the investigation procedure in an orderly and legal manner.

I have the honor

Signature

Source: Archives of the Foreign Ministry, the Turkish Embassy, Constantinople, the Political Directory, Vol. 280, No. 38, pp. 222-223.

Paris, le 29 octobre 1840

Le ministre à Cochelet

Objet: Les représentants des juifs d'Europe chez Mohammed Ali pour l'Affaire de l'assassinat du Père Thomas.

....

....

«Il paraîtrait, d'après des avis transmis par la presse, que, sur les ins-tances de MM. Crémieux et Montefiore, Mohammed Ali a cru devoir ordonner la cessation de toute poursuite contre les israélites des Damas accusés du meurtre du Père Thomas et de son domestique.

Je désire savoir, si cette détermination qui, indépendamment des con-sidérations d'humanité, a pu être dictée à ce prince par le désir de mettre un terme aux embarras de cette déplorabe affaire, a été prise à titre de grâce ou après examen et révision du procès.

Je vous prie donc de me faire connaître les termes et les motifs de la décision du vice-roi...

Paris, October 29, 1840

From: The Minister.

To: Cochelet.

Subject: The visit of the representatives of the European Jews to Mohamad Ali regarding the assassination of Father Thomas.

The information transmitted by the press indicates that because of the unceasing pressure of the lawyers, Mr. Cremieux and Mr. Montefiore, Mohamad Ali has issued his orders to halt all pursuits of the Jews, who have been accused of the assassination of Father Thomas and his servant in Damascus. What I would like to know is whether this decision was taken, without any regard to humanitarian considerations, because of the pressure imposed on Prince Mohamad Ali, to put an end to unpleasant distress and hardship caused by this case. Was this decision taken because of mercy and compassion? Or as a result of the reexamination of the whole case, and the investigative procedures?

Please, in light of that, inform me of the reasons and the circumstances which caused the Viceroy, Mohamad Ali, to issue his order.

Le 2 décembre 1840

Réponse de Cochelet au ministre Guizot, successeur de Thiers.

Monsieur le Ministre,

....

....

Vous trouvez également ci-annexée une copie de la traduction du firman de Mohammed Ali, en date du 29 août dernier, relatif aux juifs de Damas qui m'est demandé par la dépêche précitée (celle du 29 octobre).

La détermination de Mohammed Mi avait été prise à titre de grâce, afin de mettre un terme aux embarras de cette déplorable affaire. Mais comme ce vizir était très malade quand il s'est décidé à l'accorder, on a trouvé moyen de faire changer les termes du firman. Il n'a eu d'ailleurs aucune révision du procès. Je ne serai pas étonné qu'on cherchât à la provoquer auprès de la Porte, maintenant que Damas est au pouvoir des Turcs.

D'après le langage tenu dernièrement par le Sultan qui, sur la demande de Mr Montefoire, a délivré à la nation israélite un firman, upour qu'elle ne soit plus exposée dans ses Etats à être recherchée pour des crimes comme ceux de Damas», l'issue de procès ne serait pas douteuse et un nouveau scandale aurait lieu.

Je pense que dans l'intérêt de tous les juifs, il conviendrait beaucoup mieux que l'on ne parlât plus de cette malheureuse affaire. Le temps qui assoupit tout, l'assoupira également, tandis que si on la réveille encore, le gouvernement du Roi se trouvera obligé pour justifier la conduite de ses agents de publier des pièces officielles qui donneraient lieu à de nouvelles polémiques qui ne seraient pas sans inconvénient.

Je suis

December 2nd, 1840

Reponse of Cochelet to Minister Guizot, the successor of Minister Thiers.

Mr. Minister Dir.

Enclosed with the letter, please find a translated copy of the executive order which was issued by Mohamad Ali, on the 28th, of August, regarding the Jews of Damascus, which you have requested by your telegraph message October 29th.

Mohamad Ali, decided to issue this order for compassionate and humanitarian reasons because of the unpleasant distress and hardships caused by this case. Mohamad Ali's grave illness was instrumental and beneficial in changing the terms of his executive order. No review was made as to the investigation procedures. It would not surprise me, if the case is brought to the attention of the Imperial Court in Constantinople. Especially, when Damascus is within the reach of the Ottoman Turks. The latest news would indicate that the Ottoman Sultan, in response to Mr. Montefiore's demand, gave the Jewish people an executive order declaring that "Crimes similar to the crime of Damascus are not to be presented or considered in the Ottoman Empire", because this kind of investigation provides room for new scandals. There no doubt regarding the honesty of the investigation procedures.

I believe that it is in the interest of all Jews not to mention the investigation of this miserable case. Time will reduce the intense feelings of tension and hatred as a result of this case. The Government of His Majesty the King, himself is obligated to justify the conduct and to defend the positions of its officials, and to permit the press to publish the official documents which would provide the opportunity for discussion. However, that would not be suitable or appropriate.

Faithfully

Annexe: Traduction du firman adressé à Schérif Pacha, gouverneur général de la Syrie, en date du 2 Réjeb 1256 (29 août 1840), relativement aux juifs de Damas, assassins du Père Thomas et de son domestique.

«MM Montefiori et Crémieux se sont rendus auprès de moi, au nom de la communauté israélite d'Europe, pour me demander de délivrer et tranquilliser ceux des juifs qui sont aujourd'hui en prison ou en fuite à raison des poursuites auxquelles avait donné lieu la disparition à Damas du Père Thomas et de son domestique, au mois de zilhidjé 1255.

Après avoir pris connaissance de ces demandes et prières présentées au nom d'une société considérable, je n'ai pas cru pouvoir les repousser et j'ai ordonné ce qui suit:

«Vous délivrez ceux de la nation juive qui sont en prison et vous rassurerez ceux qui ont pris la fuite en les invitant à revenir. Vous veillerez à ce qu'ils continuent d'exercer leur industrie et leur commerce, sans qu'aucun d'eux soit maltraité par qui que ce soit dans l'exercice de sa profession. Et,. en protégeant comme auparavant leur repos et leur tranquillité, vous ne négligerez rien pour faire renaître la sécurité parmi cette nation».

Source: Archives Affaires Etrangères.

Alexandrie, direction commerciale, vol.28.

Pour la lettre du ministre du 29 octobre, nr.79, fo1.532-533.

Pour la réponse du consul, le 2 décembre, nr.220, fol.542-543. Et pour l'annexe, fol.544.

Annex: The translation of the Executive Order which was addressed to the Governor General of Syria, Sharif Pasha, on the 2nd of Rajah 1256 H, (29th of August 1840), regarding the Jews of Damascus, who assassinated Father Thomas and his servant.

"Mr. Montefiori and Mr. Cremieux met with me, as representatives of the Jewish Community of Europe, to put an end to the pursuit of Jews and to assure those who were detained in jail today, or who had fled, because of their pursuit by the local authorities who were investigating the disappearance of Father Thomas and his servant in Damascus, in the month of Zul-Hijja 1255 H.

After reviewing the demands and the request in the name of an important community, I do not believe that I can refuse them, therefore, I have ordered the following:

To set free the Jews who are detained in jail, to pardon those who are fugitives and wanted, and to make sure of their return to the practice of their commercial and industrial activities. And that none of them will be subjected to any kind of mistreatment by anyone, regardless of who it might be. You guarantee them protection, as it was in the past, for their safety and security. Do not disregard any measure which may return peace to this nation."

Source: Archives of the Foreign Ministry Alexandria Directory of Commerce, Vol. 28, The letter of the Minister, Oct. 29, No. 79, pp. 532-533; The Response of the Consul, Dec. 2, No. 220, pp. 542-543; and the annex, p. 544.

Damas, le 12 décembre 1850

Ségur—Dupeyron au ministre.

Objet: Suppression de l'inscription sur le tombeau de Père Thomas dans l'église des Pères Franciscains.

Vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'entretenir, avant mon départ de Paris, de la démarche faite auprès de vous par lord Normanly, à l'effet d'obtenir la suppression de l'inscription accusatrice pour les juifs qui figure sur le tombeau élevé au Père Thomas dans l'église des Capucins à Damas.

J'avais eu l'hommeur de vous faire observer que cette démarche du gouvernement anglais ne pouvait avoir qu'un but, celui d'étendre l'influence que l'Angleterre exerce déjà sur un grand nombre d'israélites de cette ville. Sans cela, en effet, quel intérêt pouvait avoir la Grande-Bretagne, pays et gouvernement chrétien, à la disparition d'une inscription de cette espèce existant dans une ville qu'on visite peu et dans une église que les étrangers ne visitent pas, tant elle est pauvre et ignorée. J'avais ajouté que, ce que l'Angleterre, si nous nous prêtions à ses désirs, gagnerait en influence sur les juifs, nous le perdions en influence sur les chrétiens.

Un fait tout récent vient de prouver à quel point ce qui se rattache à l'épitaphe du Père Thomas impressionne les populations chrétiennes et juives de Damas.

Mr Gustave de Rothschild, fils de Mr dr Rothschild de Paris, paicourt en ce moment la Syrie. Il avait pris son passeport, afin d'éviter beaucoup d'obsession de la part de ses coreligionnaires, sous le nom de Mr de Ferrières. Mais son incognito a été bientôt trahi. Arrivé à Damas, un ou deux jours avant mon arrivée (nous logions sous le même toit et nous mangions ensemble) les rabbins sont venus le voir, les juifs l'ont entouré, et il m'a parlé ensuite de la démarche qu'on le priait de faire auprès de moi, relativement à la tombe du Père Thomas.

Je n'ai pas eu de peine à lui faire comprendre que rien ne pouvait plus nuire au succès d'une pareille négociation, que l'empressement irréfléchi des juifs à saisir toutes les occassions d'occuper publiquement, les plus marquants de leurs coreligionnaires d'Europe, du désir qu'ils éprouvent de voir effacer de cette tombe l'inscription qui les accuse de l'assassinat du pauvre missionnaire.

Mais les juifs ne se sont pas bornés à des paroles. Ils ont employé des séductions d'un autre ordre. Ils ont donné chez l'un d'eux, un protégé français, une grande soirée à Mr de Rothschild et ils m'ont adressé les plus pressantes instances pour que j'y assistasse ainsi que ma famille.

J'ai vu aussitôt quels effets une pareille concession de ma part pouvait, en pareille circonstance, produire sur l'esprit des chrétiens et j'ai fait agréer mon refus sans avoir pour cela blessé les juifs. J'ai lieu de croire que les chrétiens m'ont su gré de cette conduite...

Du côté chrétien, on a éprouvé, comme on éprouve toujours à la venue d'un juif européen marquant, une certaine inquiétude. J'ai cru comprendre que las capucins qui ont tous, depuis deux ans, quitté Damas, pour louer leur couvent aux arméniens catholiques, allaient envoyer ici un des leurs pour veiller sur la tombe du Père Thomas.

D'un autre côté, Mr de Rothschild ayant voulu avoir quelque étoffe de la fabrique d'un chrétien, protégé français, le chrétien a trouvé des subterfuges pour ne pas vendre à un homme qui lui paraissait n'être venu à Damas que pour employer son influence à obtenir ce que les juifs désirent tant.

Je suis entré dans ces détails, Mr le ministre, pour vous mieux montrer, que cette question de l'épitaphe du Père Thomas n'est pas une affaire très simple et que notre politique ici doit être de faire prendre patience aux juifs tout en rassurant les chrétiens. Autrement, nous ferions les affaires des Anglais...

P.S.: Voici la traduction de l'épitaphe italienne du Père Thomas. Cette inscription est répétée sur la pierre tumulaire en langue arabe:

«Ici reposent les os du missionnaire capucin, Père Thomas, assassiné par les juifs, le 5 février 1840».

D'après ce que j'apprends aujourd'hui même, je ne doute pas que la démarche faite auprès de vous, Mr le ministre, par Lord Normanly ne soit le résultat d'engagements pris à l'égard des juifs par le consul d'Angleterre à Damas, Mr Wood qui vient de passer un congé de plus d'un mois en Angleterre.

Source: Archives Affaires Etrangères

Consulat de Damas-Correspondance politique, vol.2 (1848-1853), nr.l, fol.132-135.

Damascus, Dec. 12, 1850

From: Seger-Duperan.

To: The prevention of an inscription on the grave stone of Father Thomas, in the Church of the Franciscan Fathers.

I was honored by your instructions before my departure from Paris, regarding Lord Normanly's efforts to pressure you into the removal of the inscriptions which contain accusations against the Jews, on the monument marking Father Thomas' grave in the Capucins Church of Damascus.

I have the honor to inform you that these types of English Governments practice no other aim than to widen the influence and authority of England which used a large number of Jews in this city. If it were in the best interest of Great Britain, which is governed by a Christian Government, to remove this inscription they would. But it is in a city visited by only an insignificant number of tourists, in a Church which is never visited by foreigners, due to its location in a poor section of low stature. I might add to this, they will appeal to and win the influence and support of the Jews, and will lose influence over the Christians. Not long ago, this inscription on the grave of Father Thomas made an impact on the feeling of the Jews and the Christian alike in the city of Damascus.

Mr. Gustave Rothschild, the son of the well known Mr. Rothschild in Paris, went to Syria during this period. He obtained a passport under the disguised name of Mr. Ferrieres, in order to avoid resistance and disturbance to followers of his religion, the Jews. But his disguise betrayed him, because upon his arrival in Damascus, a day or two before my arrival, the Rabbis came to visit him, and he was surrounded by the Jews, while I was living with him under one roof and we ate our meals together. He spoke with me after these visits, stating that the followers of his religion had asked him to discuss the problem of Father Thomas' grave with me.

I did not find any difficulties in making him understand that there was no harm or injury which would occur by our discussion of the matter as

it was nothing compared to the thoughtless, impertinence which the Jews display on all occasions in order to engage public opinion. This was particularly obvious after what had been clearly displayed, by the oldest of their religious brethren in Europe, in their desire to erase what was written, on the tombstone, the accusations against the assassins of the poor missionary, Father Thomas. But the Jews did not accept this kind of talk, and they resorted to another kind of enticement by arranging a magnificent dinner party for Mr. Rothschild. This was accomplished by one of them who enjoyed French protection status. They invited me and my family to the party. I realized, immediately, what effect my acceptance would leave in the minds of the Christians under these circumstances. So I politely declined to accept the invitation in a considerate manner which was harmless to the feelings of the Jews. The Christians felt relieved by my behavior. I think the Christians were worried, as they have usually felt in the past when a noted Jewish personality from Europe visits Damascus. I believe that the Capucins, who left Damascus two years ago, to assert their mutual compassionate feeling with the Armenian Catholics, will send one of them here to watch over the grave of Father Thomas. Mr. Rothschild also wanted to see some text material which is produced and made by a Christian who enjoys the protection of France. However, this Christian decided to be absent in order not to have to sell what he produced to a man who had come to Damascus (as he thought), for no other purpose except to use him in the support of what the Jews want.

I present these details, Mr. Minister Sir, to reveal to you clearly that the problem of the inscriptions on the monument over the grave of Father Thomas is not an easy one. And that our policy here must be guided by toleration and patience toward the Jews, and by dispelling the anxiety of the Christians at the same time. And if we are not able to do that, then we will be doing what the English are doing.

P.S.: Here is the writing on the epitaph of Father Thomas' grave; translated from Italian. This inscription is repeated on a marble slab in Arabic:

"Here lie the bones of Father Thomas, the Capucin missionary who was assassinated by the Jews on the 5th of February 1840."

Today I learned what has confirmed for me that the visit of Lord Normanly to you Mr. Minister Sir, was the result of Jewish intervention with the English Consul in Damascus. Mr. Wood spent more than a month of his vacation in England.

Source: Archives of the French Foreign Ministry. Consulate of Damascus, Political Correspondence, Vol. 2 (1848-1853) No. 1, pp. 132-135.

Correspondence of the Consul:

1 - Letter from Moses Montefiore to Palmerston, February 28, 1850. Ibid., pp. 92-94, A plea for mercy letter to the English Minister to

intervene with the French Foreign Minister in Paris. In the letter Montefiore mentioned his intervention with the Cardinal of Rome on this matter.

2 - Letter from Moses Montefiore to Prince Louis Napoleon on the same subject. Ibid., pp. 95-96. Mr. Montefiore attached to his letter the text of the inscription, in Italian and Arabic, on the grave in the Franciscan Church, Damascus.

3 - Letter from Palmerston to Lord Normanly, 8th of March, 1850. Transmitting the Plea for Mercy letter presented by Montefiore, Ibid., p. 98.

As to the verbal instructions of the French Minister to the French Consul in Damascus, Mr. Segur-Dupeyron, and the latter's response on December 12, 1850, these were mentioned earlier in the text, p. 230.